00094252

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY-400 023.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 21 October, 2015

OF

Fire Side Lucubrations.

BY

NATHAN DRAKE, M.D.

Author of Literary Hours

OF ESSAYS ON PERIODICAL LITERATURE, AND OF SHAKESPEARE AND HIS TIMES.

Dissolve frigus, ligus super ~~fr~~x foco Large reponens * * * * * * Posces Librum cum Iumine - et Intendes animum studiis et rebus honestis HORATIUS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

LONDON
PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER - ROW

Gov.
.324.7
94252

00094252

MM. 4:16

CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

No.		PAGE
XI.	On the Feelings of Regret which accompany a long Absence from our Country and our Home	1
XII.	Kirton Priory, or the Burtons and Bellerdistons; a Tale of the Seventeenth Century, continued	26
XIII.	Critical Observations on the "Odes and other Poems" of Henry Neele	70
XIV.	On the English Translations of Tasso's Gerusalemme Liberata; with the first twenty-eight stanzas of that Poem attempted in Blank Verse	102
XV.	Critical Observations on the "Domestic Hours" of Cornelius Neale, late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge	131
XVI.	Kirton Priory, or the Burtons and Bellerdistons; a Tale of the Seventeenth Century, continued	153
XVII.	Critical Observations on "The Vale of Slaughden;" a Poem, by Mr. James Bird	184
XVIII.	The Same concluded	210
XIX.	On returning to Home after long Absence. Domestic Sonnets	245
XX.	Kirton Priory, or the Burtons and Bellerdistons; a Tale of the Seventeenth Century, concluded. Ode to Night	267

WINTER NIGHTS.

No. XI.

Ubinam, aut quibus locis te postum, patria, reor?
Cupit ipsa pupula ad te sibi dirigere aciem,
Rabie fera carens dum breve tempus animus est.
Egone a mea remota hæc ferar in nemora domo?
Patria, bone, amicis, genitoribus meis?

CATULLUS.

O, where dost thou, my native country, lie?
Thee in what distant spot shall fancy spy?
Fain, for that little space from misery free,
Would mine eyes fix their straining balls on thee:
O lost, O banish'd, from my pleasing home!
These foreign woods must I for ever roam?
Quit all I have, my friends, my natal earth,
Distant from those who gave my being birth?

NOTT.

In a former paper we noticed at some length the benefits resulting to society and to the indi-

vidual, from that most pleasing and useful of all local attachments, the *Love of home*.

It is evident, that in proportion as this has been felt and valued, will be the regret and sorrow of him who by accident or stern necessity is deprived of the blessings which flow in such numerous channels from the enjoyment of country and of friends.

In such a situation, the heart, stript of all those endearing ties which threw a charm over existence, pines with incessant anguish; and though surrounded perhaps by luxuries and conveniencies unknown to the land of its birth, turns with augmented loathing from their proffered sweets. All, in fact, seems one gloomy and sterile blank; and if ever a ray of sunlight illumine the dreary pathway of the exile, it is when remembering those from whom a cruel fate has severed him, he dwells upon their virtues and their love, and a tear of soothing melancholy bathes his withered cheek.

A destitution of this forlorn nature, more or less aggravated by bodily pain, or mental suffering, has, in every age and nation, been occasionally the lot of man; but never has it been painted

ch force and effect as by the Greeks,
om the *ardor patriæ* was ranked among
t of virtues, and cherished with un-
d enthusiasm. Hence, the grief of
, occasioned by his *absence from home*,
ne of the prominent features of that
wn character, and breathes, indeed,
out the whole of the Odyssey, by far
t interesting epic poem which has ever
itten, an indescribable charm.

1 years had this man of many sorrows
tained in the island of Calypso, and
the enamoured goddess had saved him
e fatal consequences of shipwreck on her
ad given him her heart, and even pro-
im the boon of immortality, yet nothing
xtinguish within his breast the love of

Ιέμενος καὶ καπνὸν ἀποθρῴσκοντα νοῆσαι
Ης γαίης, θανέειν ἱμείρεται·

To see the smoke from his lov'd palace rise,
While the dear isle in distant prospect lies,
With what contentment could he close his eyes.
POPE.

Nothing can exceed the romantic loveliness of the picture where, in the fifth book, Hermes, commissioned by Jupiter, descends to inform Calypso that it is the will of heaven that the toil-worn hero should regain his native coast; nor can the soul-consuming grief of Ulysses be more forcibly delineated than when, in powerful contrast with the glowing beauty of the preceding description, he is represented apart from all its charms, desolate and weeping on the lonely shore of the ocean: —

—— ὄφρα μέγα σπέος ἵκετο, τῷ ἐνὶ νύμφη
ad
Πόντον ἐπ' ἀτρυγέτον δέρκεσκετο, δάκρυα λείβων.

Large was the grot in which the nymph he found,
every beauty crown'd)

She sat and sung; the rocks resound her lays:
The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze:
Cedar and frankincense an odorous pile,
Flam'd on the hearth, and wide perfum'd the isle;
While she with work and song the time divides,
And through the loom the golden shuttle guides.
Without the grot, a various silvan scene
Appear'd around, and groves of living green;
Poplars and alders ever quivering play'd,
And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade;
On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
The birds of broadest wing their mansion form,
The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,
And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.
Depending vines the shelving cavern skreen,
With purple clusters blushing through the green.
Four limpid fountains from the clefts distill,
And every fountain pours a sev'ral rill,
In mazy windings wandering down the hill:
Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were crown'd,
And glowing violets threw odours round;
A scene where, if a god should cast his sight,
A god might gaze, and wonder with delight!
Joy touched the messenger of heaven: he stay'd
Entranc'd; and al

Him, entering in the cave, Calypso knew;
For powers celestial to each other's view
Stand still confess'd, though distant far they lie
To habitants of earth, or sea, or sky.
But sad Ulysses, by himself apart,
Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heart;
All on the lonely shore he sat to weep,
And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep;
Toward his lov'd coast he roll'd his eyes in vain,
Till, dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

POPE.

That this tender regard for his family and his friends, was considered by Homer as one of the noblest and brightest features in the character of Ulysses, is evident from the repeated efforts which he has made, and often in the same words, to impress it on the minds of his hearers. When Calypso, in obedience to the divine commands, goes forth, though reluctantly, to acquaint Ulysses that he is at liberty to return to Ithaca, and finds him, as usual, lamenting his destiny by the sea-side, nearly the same imagery and expressions are adopted as in the former instance, and the two closing lines

of each passage in the original are precisely similar:

Τὸν δ' ἄρ ἐπ' ἀκτῆς εὗρε καθήμενον· οὐδέ ποτ' ὄσσε

ad

Πόντον ἐπ' ατρυγετον δερκέσκετο, δάκρυα λείβων.

Him pensive on the lonely beach she found,
With streaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd
And inly pining for his native shore;
For now the soft enchantress pleas'd no more;
For now, reluctant, and constrain'd by charms,
Absent he lay in her desiring arms,
In slumbers wore the heavy night away,
On rocks and shores consum'd the tedious day;
There sat all desolate, and sigh'd alone,
With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan,
And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,
Till, dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.

POPE.

That Homer should have thought it no degradation to the character of him whom he has manifestly brought forward as a model for imitation, to represent him as thus [illegible]
weeping for his [illegible]
should think it [illegible]

that in an extraordinary degree, with piety, patience, and enthusiastic tenderness, as well as with wisdom and valour, is a striking instance, not only of the kind and cordial feelings of the venerable bard, but of the artless and affectionate character of the times in which he lived. It is also, I apprehend, no slight proof, that, three thousand years ago, the patriotic and domestic virtues, the paternal, conjugal and filial ties, were more deeply felt and honoured than they have since been through numerous ages of augmenting refinement.

It is this continued developement of simple and natural manners, this skilful unfoldment of the great and inartificial emotions of the human heart, that, together with the matchless structure of its fable, throws such a power of irresistible attraction over the delightful pages of the Odyssey.

Beautiful as are the passages which I have quoted from this enchanting poem, in proof of the spirit of local attachment which pervaded the early ages of Greece; and as illustrative of the feelings consequent on a deprivation of the blessings of home and kindred, the picture would

be left incomplete, were I not to bring forward the scene of the fifth book, where, in conjunction with the warmest declaration of patriotic ardour and domestic love, is happily blended an equally forcible delineation of the wounded vanity of Calypso, and of the patience, fortitude, and insinuating prudence of her parting guest.

Διογενες Λαερτιαδη, πολυμηχαν' Ὀδυσσευ,
ad
Κυμασι και πολεμῳ· μετα και τοδε επι ποῖσι γενεσθω·

Ulysses! (with a sigh she thus began)
O sprung from Gods! in wisdom more than man!
Is then thy home the passion of thy heart?
Thus wilt thou leave me; are we thus to part?
Farewell! and ever joyful mayst thou be,
Nor break the transport with one thought of me.
But ah, Ulysses! wert thou given to know
What fate yet dooms thee, yet, to undergo;
Thy heart might settle in this scene of ease,
And e'en these slighted charms might learn to please.
A willing goddess, and immortal life,
Might banish from thy mind an absent wife.

Am I inferior to a mortal dame?
Less soft my feature, less august my frame?
O shall the daughters of mankind compare
Their earth-born beauties with the heavenly fair?

Alas! for this (the prudent man replies)
Against Ulysses shall thy anger rise?
Lov'd and ador'd, O goddess! as thou art,
Forgive the weakness of a human heart.
Though well I see thy graces far above
The dear, though mortal, object of my love,
Of youth eternal well the difference know,
And the short date of fading charms below;
Yet every day, while absent thus I roam,
I languish to return and die at home.
Whate'er the gods shall destine me to bear
In the black ocean, or the watery war,
'Tis mine to master with a constant mind;
Inur'd to perils, to the worst resign'd.
By seas, by wars, so many dangers run;
Still I can suffer: their high will be done.

POPE.

It is scarcely possible to impress the mind more strongly with a sense of the devotedness of the Greeks to their country, than by the fact, which has been mentioned by several mo-

dern travellers, that, notwithstanding the lapse of so many ages, and so many overwhelming revolutions, the same passion still lingers, and that with considerable energy too, in the breasts of their degraded posterity. "There," cried a Greek pilot to Mr. Anson, at the island of Tenedos, "there 'twas our fleet lay!" "What fleet," said Mr. Anson. "What fleet!" replied the man, a little piqued at the question, "why our Grecian fleet at the siege of Troy."*

If, when thus surrounded by all the pleasures of luxury and love, Ulysses could still turn from them to lament his paternal rocks and domestic hearth, we may readily conceive what his patriotic countrymen must have felt when exile was imbittered, as is usually the case, with privation and accumulated suffering. The picture has been repeatedly drawn by the Greek tragedians, and more particularly by the graceful and pathetic Sophocles, who, in the character of Philoctetes, has placed before us one of the most affecting representations of human

* Vide Polwhele's Local Attachment, vol. ii. Notes, p. 80.

wretchedness and despair, occasioned by solitude, treachery, and desertion, of which the muse of melancholy has to boast.

This intensity of attachment for country and for home, which burnt with such an inextinguishable lustre throughout Greece, was transmitted, though with considerable diminution of its tenderness and strength, to the sterner and less enthusiastic descendants of Romulus. It was, however, nurtured amongst them rather from motives of policy than from the genuine impulse of nature and sensibility. Yet instances are not wanting, and those too of a very interesting and pathetic kind, where, when they had become thoroughly imbued with a taste for the literature of their Grecian colonies, and had learnt to feel for their country beyond what the cold ostentation of patriotism as a mere instrument of conquest could effect, absence from home was lamented by them with all the pensive regret and endearing recollections which nature prompts on being deprived of the blessings of domestic intercourse. It was then that the amiable, but too voluptuous Ovid, when banished to the shores of the Euxine, could pour

out the sorrows of a heart divorced from all its wonted ties of affection, in strains thus sweetly plaintive.

Non hæc in nostris, ut quondam, scribimus hortis, &c.

I write not now as in those happier hours,
When pleasure woo'd me in her Latian bowers;
When night descending shrouded o'er my head,
Laid in sweet sleep on my accustom'd bed.

And again, a little lower:

Forgotten and alone your bard shall die,
On distant shores, beneath a foreign sky;
And his last wretched hour of parting breath
Be made more fearful by his place of death.
On the accustom'd bed he shall not lay
His languid limbs, and gently die away,
While weeping friends attend his life's sad close,
And smooth the pillow for his long repose.*

The gentle Ovid was too sensitive to endure for any length of time the privations of exile in a rude and sterile clime; he died in a few years

* From Bland's Collections from the Greek Anthology, 8vo. 1813, pp. 141, 142.

of a broken heart. We are indebted to the masterly pencil of the poet of Local Attachment, for a striking portrait of this unhappy bard perishing under the pressure of his afflictions.

Beneath the storms that shake the dreary pole,
Behold his whitening temples! see him sink
A prey to agony that rends his soul!
Lo, burst each social, each endearing link,
With trembling knees he totters on the brink
Of fate! Yet, midst the pontic horrors pale,
Tho' "o'er the bitterness of death he think,"
Yet on the distant wave of glimmering sail
He kens with kindling hope, till dusky twilight fail.*

I have mentioned in a former paper the unconquerable attachment of the Swiss to their romantic soil, and that they have not unfrequently fallen victims in a foreign land to compulsory absence from their native mountains. So often, indeed, did desertion and death take place among the Swiss troops in the French service, whenever one of their wild and simple tunes, known by the name of the *Rans de Vaches*, was

* Local Attachment, vol. i. p. 28.

played, that it was at length expressly forbidden to be performed on pain of * death. "This tune," says Dr. Beattie, "having been the attendant of their childhood and early youth, recalls to their memory those regions of wild beauty and rude magnificence, those days of liberty and peace, those nights of festivity, those happy assemblies, those tender passions, which formerly endeared to them their country, their homes, and their employments; and which, when compared with the scenes of uproar they are now engaged in, and the servitude they now undergo, awaken such regret as entirely overpowers them."†

One of these fatal results of *absence from home*, and which seemed to the French so much the consequence of disease, that they termed it *la maladie du pays*, has been recorded by Mr.

---

* "Cet air si chevi des Suisses qu'il fut dèfendu, sous peine de mort de le jouer dans leurs troupes, parce qu'il faisoit fondre en larmes, déserter ou mourir ceux qui l'entendoient. tant il excitoit en eux l'ardent désir de revoir leur pays."—Rousseau, Dictionnaire de Musique, art. Rance des Vaches.

† Beattie's Essays on Poetry and Music, part i. chap. vi. 2.

Polwhele with his usual tenderness and picturesque beauty.

His arms the languid Swiss, in absence, folds,
And longs for his bleak mountain's snowy crest.
Tho' silver-lulling streams solicit rest,
And tepid breezes fan the fair alcoves,
Where seems to glow the Elysium of the blest,
Reluctant from his pinewood gloom, he roves
Thro' soft savannahs warm, thro' gay-green whispering groves.

Lur'd not by beauties that around him blaze,
He wings his spirit to the rocky hill;
And unbewilder'd by the magic maze,
He singles out his cataract, his rill,
The side-long fallow he was wont to till,
His crag-percht hut to all his wishes dear!
How vain, alas! his throbbing heart to still!
When forms far off, to fancy's eye so near,
Now float within his grasp, now fainting disappear!

E'en where the blasts of war the forest shake,
Tho' leagu'd with conquering troops he firmly stand;
If some soft note his early dreams awake,
Some note that sweetly paints his native land;
Strait, falls the sabre from his nerveless hand!

And woe-begone till moment meet he find
To steal unheeded from the foreign band,
He flies; and, as he hears in every wind
A murmur, casts full oft a fearful look behind.*

As no nation has been so much, and so justly celebrated for its sense of domestic enjoyment as our own, so it might naturally be expected that our writers, and especially our poets, would be more than usually happy in particularising both its blessings and the misery arising from their privation; and accordingly, some of the most popular and pleasing passages of our most pleasing poets, are occupied by this very interesting subject. It will be sufficient, however, for my present purpose, to quote the well-known opening of Goldsmith's admirable poem, intitled "The Traveller," which, together with a small additional sketch from his "Deserted Village," will place before us the most fascinating picture of home-felt happiness, and, at the same time, the most vivid delineation of those feelings of destitution which follow a deprival of its comforts.

* Local Attachment, vol. i. pp. 28, 29.

Familiar as the lines are to every lover of our poetry, they never can be re-contemplated without fresh admiration of their consummate beauty and loveliness. It was indeed a prominent feature of the exquisite nature of Goldsmith, to enter with peculiar fulness and felicity into the domestic feelings and enjoyments of humble life; and he has done this with a pathos and simplicity perfectly unrivalled. The description which he has given us in the exordium of his "Traveller," of his paternal home, and of the ceaseless regret with which he looks back on the kindness once experienced there, must awaken the sympathies of every affectionate heart.

Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheld, or wandering Po;
Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door;
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies,
A weary waste expanding to the skies;
Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee:
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.

Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend;
Blest be that spot, where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire;
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair;
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crown'd,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good.

But me, not destin'd such delights to share,
My prime of life in wand'ring spent and care;
Impell'd with steps unceasing to pursue
Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view;
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow flies;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.

The close of these fine lines recals to memory a beautiful epigram in the Greek Anthology, by Leonidas of Tarentum, who, being captured by Pyrrhus king of Epirus, during his war with the Tarentines, had the misfortune, like Gold-

smith, "to find no spot of all the world his own;" yet was he somewhat reconciled to his fate by the recollection that the love of the Muses had been the constant companion of his banishment: a consolation of which the English poet might certainly boast in a still higher degree throughout the whole course of his desultory life.

Far from Tarentum's native soil I lie,
Far from the dear land of my infancy.
'Tis dreadful to resign this mortal breath,
But in a stranger-land is worse than death!
It is not life to pass our fever'd age
In ceaseless wanderings on the world's wide stage,
But me the muse has ever loved, and given
Sweet joys to counterpoise the curse of heaven,
Nor lets my memory decay, but long
To distant times preserves my deathless song. *

Absence from home during the evening of life, and more especially at the awful hour of death, must undoubtedly be considered as a calamity of the most deplorable kind, and par-

* From Bland's Greek Anthology, p. 300.

ticularly so, if this destiny await us in a foreign land. The miseries attendant on such a fate, and to which Leonidas alludes in a general manner, have been described by a poet of our own country with the most pathetic circumstantiality, forming, indeed, by far the most forcible appeal to the heart in the whole compass of his works.

No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear,
Pleas'd thy pale ghost, or grac'd thy mournful bier.
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos'd,
By foreign hands thy decent limbs compos'd,
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorn'd,
By strangers honour'd, and by strangers mourn'd!*

And that Goldsmith, "a wanderer on the world's wide stage," dreaded this for his own allotment, and pined with a longing anxiety to repose his wearied age within the shelter of his native village, has been told us by himself in strains of unparalleled sweetness and tender simplicity.

* Elegy to the memory of an unfortunate lady.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs, and God has giv'n my share;
I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bow'rs to lay me down,
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose:
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learn'd skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return — and die at home at last. —
Retreats from care, that never must be mine!

It seems an instinct, indeed, implanted in our nature, not only to wish to sleep near the bones of our fathers, but that the place of our rest should not be forgotten by those whom we best have loved.

Μηδέ μοι ακλαυστος θαναΐος μόλα αλλα φίλεισι
Καλλειποιμὶ θανον αλγεα καὶ γοναχας.

Oh! may some pitying friend lament my death,
And shed the dew of sorrow on my grave! —

WAKEFIELD.

was the wish of the philosopher Solon, and, in coincidence with this affecting sentiment, the muse of Gray exclaims,

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

It is this consolatory hope in the bosom of the survivor, that the parted spirit may be soothed by a fond attention to its earthly relics, which, independent of the gratification we ourselves receive from the indulgence of our grief on the spot, has rendered the idea of interment in a stranger's land so painful to our feelings. It is the same pleasing expectation, also, which has given birth, in every age and nation, to the decoration of graves with flowers and inscriptions; and it is the wish of still tenanting the scenes which we loved in our lives that has given origin to the not unfrequent request of being buried in such a valley, or beneath such a tree.

"Bend thy blue course, O stream! round the narrow plain of Lutha;" exclaims the son

of Fingal. "Let the green woods hang over it, from their hills; the sun look on it at noon. Then, come thou, O Malvina, with all thy music come! Lay Ossian in the plain of Lutha; *let his tomb rise in the lovely field.*"*

Here let me rest,

says an elegant writer of the present day, pointing to a church-yard surrounded by the most beautiful romantic scenery.

Those mountains rude, which rear their heads on high.
And those dark woods, that screen their giant sides,
Shall shield my monument from northern snows:
And that wild stream, which rolls unseen below,
Shall murmur music near my humble grave. —
As in oblivious silence I repose,
Ah! how delighted, were my peaceful spirit,
Should some sweet maid, at midnight's solemn hour,
(Led by the radiance of th' approving moon,)
Approach that spot, where long, in soft repose
Pleas'd I have slept, and water with her tears

* Opening of Berrathon, a poem. Vide Ossian's Poems vol. ii p. 195.—edit. of 1785.

The rose and woodbine, that around my tomb,
In chaste, in generous, circling clusters grow;
While from her lap, she scattered flowers around,
Cull'd in the evening, from the cottage door
Of some good peasant.*

It should however, never be forgotten, that, to be remembered with love and veneration, during absence, or after death, it is necessary to have been useful and beneficent to others; then may we address our friends in the language of the Roman poet, and under the full assurance that the request will not have been made in vain:

Vivite felices, memores et vivite nostri
Sive erimus, seu nos fata fuisse volent.

---

* Philosophy of Nature, vol. ii. p. 209.

No. XII.

Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes. — Is it not like the king?
——————— What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again,
Revisits thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature,
So horridly to shake our disposition,
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our soul? —
——————— Hold, hold, my heart;
And you my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up!

SHAKSPEARE.

EMILY had no sooner rejoined her father, than she communicated to him the result of the accidental interview which had occurred between herself and Edward. He highly commended her conduct; observing, at the same time, "that he could have no objection to her meet-

ing Mr. Bellerdiston and his sister, provided he should be able in the interim to obtain some more full and satisfactory knowledge of the principles and previous life of the former. "That he has been a loyal subject and a brave soldier, is all," he remarked, "that I at present know concerning him; but something further is requisite, before I suffer such a confidential intercourse to take place, as must necessarily follow from the very kind of interview which the peculiarity of his situation compels him to seek. Early to-morrow morning, therefore," he continued, "I will endeavour, my love, to find out Mr. Melville, whom, on many accounts, I particularly wish to see; and from him, I have no doubt, I shall learn all that may be wanting to form a due determination."

Accordingly the next morning, immediately after breakfast, summoning Jerome, he inquired "if he knew where Sir Gregory's late chaplain lived."—"I cannot say I do, your honour;" he replied, "but I think Alan, the old gardener that was, will not refuse to tell us; his cottage is just at the entrance of the village, and

I can soon" — "Stay, Jerome," said the Colonel, "you shall show me thither, for I will speak to this old man myself." — The sun was bright and warm, and after a pleasant walk of little more than a mile, they reached a small green skirted with hamlets, and in the centre of which rose the tower and spire of Kirton church. One of the best and neatest of these tenements was the abode of Alan, and here they found the grey-headed old man busily occupied in his little garden. He had formed one of many daily employed in the Priory grounds, but, having spent his best years in the service of a generous master, had long been advanced to a kind of mere superintendency over younger and more active men. He welcomed Jerome with an air sufficiently courteous, but no sooner had Colonel Burton's name been pronounced, than a heavy gloom overspread his countenance, and he shrank back sullen and suspicious. "My good friend," said the Colonel, observing the change, "be not alarmed; I come hither, I assure you, with no other than a friendly purpose, both towards you, and your late

worthy master, whom I hope to see soon again at the Priory, and whose cause you will materially serve, by pointing out to me the residence of his former chaplain, Mr. Melville. I wish to have some conversation with him, and you will oblige me much by showing me the way thither." The features of old Alan relaxed at the idea of being in any manner employed for the benefit of his master; and though somewhat incredulous as to the declaration of the Colonel, he thought no harm could possibly follow from conducting him to so wise and good a man as Mr. Melville. Brightening, therefore, into a smile, and bowing respectfully, "he hoped," he said, "his honour would pardon his awkwardness and surprise;" declaring, at the same time, his utmost willingness to do all his strength and means afforded to assist his gracious master. "I would go, please your honour;" he added, "if these poor limbs would let me, to the farthest end of the world to serve him. — I would spend the last shilling, nay, I would shed the last drop of blood I had, to seat him once more in the old Priory!" — "Well, well, honest Alan," replied the Colonel, "if I

wanted any further proof of Sir Gregory's uniform kindness and worth, your attachment would amply supply it. But let us now hasten to Mr. Melville, for my business with him is intimately connected with the welfare of your master's house." Saying this, he dismissed Jerome, and Alan, after a few minutes' preparation, stood ready to act as his guide.

Passing the village-green, they soon came within sight of the parsonage-house, formerly the residence of Mr. Melville; an object which recalling to Alan's recollection the modest virtues and unostentatious charities of that good man, he burst forth into a heart-felt and well-merited eulogium on the piety and utility of his life and character; observing, with a sigh, "that since he had been ejected from the living, now some years ago, scarcely a happy or contented face was to be seen throughout the village. Of the few, your honour;" he continued, "who still wear a smile upon their countenance, there are none, I believe, but what form part of the little flock which gathers every Sabbath evening, whither we are now going, for instruction and for prayer."

As he said this, they began gradually to descend, and, after travelling for nearly four miles over broken ground, or along sequestered lanes, they entered a narrow valley, through which a small, though beautiful river, was winding its delightful course. Dark rocks jutting out on the northern side, diversified the scenery, and rose, like the lofty towers of some gigantic fortress, while the current ran sportively murmuring at their base. As they advanced, however, these naked crags began to soften into verdure, and the vale expanding, the eye reposed on features of a richer character. Masses of the finest wood now clothed to their summits the mountain heights on each side, descending often to the very margin of the water; while in various parts might be seen starting from the dark foliage, rocks grey with age and lichens, or tinted with the more vivid vesture of shrubs and mosses. Still further on, the dale spread wider, unfolding a scene of perfect amenity and beauty. The stream, become more broad and tranquil, flowed on through meadows green as an emerald, and enlivened by some scattered sheep, while distantly on its left bank, and

partly enveloped in wood, was seen a neat farm house, with the picturesque accompaniments of a rustic bridge and overhanging cliff. "Yonder," said Alan, pointing up the valley, "is Mr. Melville's dwelling." — "It is a paradise of peace and love," exclaimed the Colonel, "worthy of the character you describe!" — Hastening forward, they now soon reached their place of destination, and were met by the venerable chaplain, who had for some time marked their approach, with a welcome of mingled pleasure and surprise. The first salutations being passed, and old Alan consigned to the care of the husbandmen, Mr. Melville instantly introduced the Colonel to his wife, a widowed daughter, and three grand-children, a family group whose striking features and contrasted ages, were of the most interesting description. The ladies, who had been previously acquainted with the Colonel's liberal and friendly intentions towards the Bellerdistons, received him with unfeigned complaisance; and he, in return, was delighted with the marked benevolence and resignation which beamed on the aged countenance of Mrs. Mel-

ville; the matron-like dignity and unaffected simplicity of her daughter, Mrs. Aston, and the presage of surpassing beauty which glowed on the cheeks, and sparkled from the eyes of the youngest female, a girl of fourteen years of age, who, with her two brothers, boys full of health and playful vigour, formed the back ground of this domestic and enchanting picture. A simple and unadorned neatness, the indication of economy, but not of poverty, reigned around, and gave an assurance of durability to what, in every sober man's estimation, surpasses all that wealth or luxury has to give.

After a slight refreshment bestowed with uncommon hilarity, and partaken of with proportionate pleasure, Colonel Burton proposed to his host a walk on the banks of his beautiful river, intimating at the same time a wish to consult him on affairs of some moment to both. Mr. Melville readily acquiesced, and the Colonel having taken leave of that gentleman's amiable family, and left orders for Alan to return to the village, they proceeded further up the valley, pursuing the windings of the stream through scenery which unfolded, at almost every step,

fresh objects for admiration. "I am come hither, Mr. Melville," said the Colonel, as soon as he could detach himself from the enthusiastic feelings which the loveliness of the landscape around him had excited, "for the purpose of forming with you some arrangement in behalf of the Bellerdistons. The hints which escaped you at the close of our last interview, have given me considerable pain, and I much wish that the entire revenue of the Kirton Priory estate may continue to be paid into the hands of Sir Gregory."—"My good Sir," replied Mr. Melville, "the munificence of your generosity overpowers me; it is, indeed, princely, and calls, on my part, for an explicit explanation as to the prospects and present state of the noble family of my patron. You are not yet aware, perhaps, of the value of the rent-roll you are about to dispose of; it amounts to many thousands per annum, and enabled Sir Gregory, not only to live in a style of great hospitality, but of great splendour. Situated as he now is, a fortieth part of his former income would be opulence; and, indeed, until political circumstances somewhat change in his favour, all that

can for sometime be necessary; for any notoriety here, or even the very attempt to escape from his country, might be fatal."—"Whatever the value of the estate may be, Mr. Melville," said the Colonel, "tell Sir Gregory, that I consider myself merely as his treasurer, and that I shall give immediate orders to my steward regularly to pay into your hands whatever sums you may deem it requisite to call for. Should the government remain what it is, I have no doubt we shall still be able to procure a safe asylum for your friend, and, as far as lies within my power, the inheritance of his ancestors; should it terminate, however, in a revolution favourable to the exiled family, it is most probable that the restitution I meditate will issue from a higher quarter. But now, since you have promised explanation, permit me to enquire, where Sir Gregory is, and how it has happened that, with such resources, he has been driven thus destitute from the halls of his fathers?"

"Sir Gregory Bellerdiston, Colonel Burton, is still an inmate of the Priory!"—"Upon my life, I suspected as much," exclaimed the Colonel; "but where, in the name of wonder,

has he contrived to conceal himself, and what could have been his object in having recourse to such a hazardous expedient?"

"Short as has been the period, Colonel, since you took possession of the Priory, you have already acquired a pretty accurate conception of the superstitious character of the neighbourhood. Many legendary tales, as I hinted to you yesterday, have been immemorially connected with this ancient fabric, and especially with that part of it which has been suffered to fall into decay; and, indeed, such have been the awful and extraordinary circumstances of the times in which we have lately lived, that a proneness to credulity in marvels of this kind, has been singularly prevalent among all ranks and ages. When Sir Gregory, therefore, was compelled to disappear from the circle of his friends and neighbours, we pitched upon the dormitory and refectory of the ruined part of the Priory, which were still sufficiently entire for temporary accommodation, as the seclusion of all others best calculated, from the apprehensions universally associated with it, not only for the purposes of concealment, but for

the furtherance of ulterior measures. The Bellerdistons, as you well know, Colonel Burton, had, from their zealous attachment to our martyred monarch, been long objects of hatred and suspicion to the present ruler; and when, about three months ago, they were unfortunately detected in a correspondence with the legitimate heir to the crown, a decree of confiscation and banishment immediately followed, so strict in its terms, that only four-and-twenty hours were allowed for preparation. To have quitted the kingdom at such a crisis, when the health of the protector was rapidly declining, and the stability of his government from other sources much enfeebled, would have been to relinquish every hope of early restitution; and, since to have fled for refuge to his friends would only have endangered their lives together with his own, it was thought best to have recourse to the expedient I have mentioned, more especially when we thought it probable, that by working upon the fears of those who should attempt to occupy the Priory, we might in a little time be left the sole and undisturbed possessors of its dreaded walls. For the success

of this project, nothing could be more admirably adapted than the structure of the Priory; the vast extent of its habitable parts, the intricacy of its numerous, and often concealed passages; the fearful tales in circulation both concerning it and the ruins, and the connection of the latter with the chapel, and through that with every part of the mansion, offered every facility which could render the execution at once secure and complete. I have reason, indeed, to believe, from the conversation which passed between us in the library, that you yourself, Colonel Burton, had begun to experience, even from the first movements of this plan, some portion of its intended effects.

"You are perfectly correct in your supposition, sir," replied the Colonel; "and I will frankly own, that had you persisted in your operations, neither I nor my daughter should have withstood the siege a month. But what induced you, let me ask, to relinquish a scheme, at least on your part, so auspiciously commenced?"—"The very unexpected knowledge, sir," answered the chaplain, "which we almost immediately obtained, from the necessity we

were under of approaching your person sufficiently close to overhear your conversation, that your occupation of the Priory was, in fact, compulsory, and that your views, with regard to Sir Gregory and his family, were of the most generous and benevolent complexion. To have persisted in our object after this discovery, would have been not only barbarous, but worse than useless, it would have been manifestly injurious; and I was, therefore, instantly commissioned to wait upon you, in order to acquire, if possible, some further insight into your character and intentions.

"This is one among many instances, Mr. Melville," remarked the Colonel, "of the providential result of acting conscientiously; for I do assure you, strange as the confession may appear, I had much rather have marched up against a battery of cannon, than endured the annoying consequences of your extraordinary plan of defence. But now that you have nothing to fear from your temporary tenant, what course do you think of adopting with regard to the Bellerdistons? Are they still to be subject-

ed to the inconveniences attending a life of concealment?"

"As long as Cromwell lives, or, indeed, as long as the spirit of his government exists, I am afraid, both for your sake and Sir Gregory's, this must be the case," answered Mr. Melville. "But, certainly, your admission into the secret will render it a matter of much easier and safer execution. None beside myself and a few confidential servants, of which Alan is one, are privy to the design; the rest of the numerous household having been dismissed under the belief that Sir Gregory was to leave the country on the very night after receiving the decree of Cromwell. So that, with your assistance in favour of the common idea, and in support of the ghostly terrors with which we have encircled the Priory, there can be no doubt but that we shall be able to make the confinement of the sufferers infinitely less irksome and inconvenient.

"You may depend upon my co-operation," said the Colonel, "to any extent that may be required; but, before we part, I have one fur-

ther communication to make of perhaps equal importance to the welfare of both families. He then related the circumstances which had attended the accidental meeting between Edward and Frank, at the close, "that before he permitted any farther intimacy, he was anxious to learn of Mr. Melville his unreserved opinion as to the moral disposition and habits of the younger Bellerdiston.

A glow of satisfaction lighted up the features of the aged chaplain, as he listened to this unexpected detail, and no sooner was the narrative completed, than, taking Colonel Burton by the hand, he very heartily congratulated him on an event, which might, in all probability, he remarked, lead to the permanent happiness of both houses. "For the honour and integrity of Edward Bellerdiston," he added, "I will pledge my life; as a son, a brother, and a soldier, his conduct has been, not only unimpeached, but worthy of all praise; and that he is an object of equal love and reverence to his dependants, has been evinced, with an uncommon warmth of attachment, in this his hour of adversity. To the fidelity, indeed, of some of

his late domestics, he has been indebted for a range of liberty, in which his father from his age and infirmities, and the greater penalty annexed to his detection, durst not venture to partake. In their cottages, though at the risk of all they were worth, he has frequently found an asylum; and it was near one of these, that, but a few days ago, as he has since told me, in returning from an excursion into the mountains, he had first the gratification of beholding Miss Burton."

"It is sufficient, Mr. Melville," rejoined the Colonel, "I shall leave you with a mind comparatively at ease, and prepared moreover to sanction that intercommunication of hearts, which forms in early life the purest and the sweetest of our pleasures." As he said this, they separated, the Colonel returning to the Priory, meditating on the prospect of happiness which, should the political aspect of the times become more favourable, an union with the Bellerdiston family was so likely to realise. "Had I but my gallant boy here," he exclaimed, "my long lost Henry, my satisfaction would be complete; but, he left his father's side,

disobedient only in that one instance, to combat for his King. Alas! I feel, perhaps too late, that he has chosen the nobler part; and where, should the chance of war have spared his life, he now hides his defenceless head, I tremble but to think!" — A train of thought was here suddenly aroused, too painful to be long endured; and, drawing his hat over his eyes, and converting his former saunter into a rapid but somewhat desultory pace, he soon reached the portal of the Priory.

That Emily had been anxiously waiting the return of her father, our readers are prepared to expect; he found her in fact, still sitting languid and listless in the breakfast room, and though with a book before her, apparently lost in thought; her expressive eyes were instantly fixed on the Colonel as he entered, with an earnestness and sweetness of enquiry against which there was no appeal. The information, however, which he had to communicate, gave fresh animation to her countenance, and when the permission to keep her appointment dropped from his lips, she could not avoid, somewhat demurely, observing how delighted she was

with the hope of cultivating a friendship with Jane Dellerdiston. The Colonel smiled, and after advising her not to lose so fine a morning for exercise, withdrew to the library.

The sun was yet lingering with mellowed beauty on the mountains which skirt the valley of Kirton, when Emily, leaving her father intently occupied on the quaint but interesting pages of his namesake Robert Burton, tripped lightly, but with a palpitating heart, into the oratory. The hues of evening still glowed upon its walls, and as she watched their gradual fading into the sober grey of twilight, her anxiety proportionally increased. All seemed hushed in deep repose, except when listening with suspended breath, she heard at times, the breeze murmur softly, as it swept along the aisles of the adjacent chapel. "He has forgotten me," she cried; "my credulity has betrayed me into folly!" Yet scarcely had the words escaped her lips, when the low murmur of the organ caught her ear: "Ah, no!" she exclaimed, "I hear the promised sound; how sweetly does it steal upon the stillness of the night!"

For some moments it continued to swell with increasing depth and melody; till at length, soft as the sighs of sleeping infancy, it sank and died away. Emily started, as if waking from some delightful dream, and it was not until after several minutes had elapsed, that she ventured to approach the door of the chapel, when, after again hesitating, she threw it open, and Edward and his sister stood before her. He came forward with Jane in his hand; — it was a moment in which language failed to convey the utterance of the heart. "My sister!" emphatically, but somewhat mournfully pronounced, was all that fell from the lips of Edward. Tears started in the eyes of Emily and Jane, and after some ineffectual efforts to communicate the sensations which oppressed them, they embraced in silence. "Holy as the ground we tread upon," exclaimed Edward, "be the union of my friends!" — A pause of some length ensued, when, passing forward into the body of the chapel, Emily, turning to Jane, who was reclining on her brother's arm, remarked, "that she believed the first time they had met, they had been objects to each other

of mutual surprise and apprehension." "True," she replied, "you found me offering the recollections of an overflowing heart to the memory of the best of mothers! It was her favourite spot, and therefore loved by me;—alas! it is now only by stealth that I can revisit a scene once the object of my fondest care!" "oh, say not so," answered Emily, "surely you may *now*, with perfect safety, wander over every part of these gardens; for shall it not be my peculiar province to protect you from all intrusion? "And may not I, Miss Burton," said Edward, "enjoy a similar privilege; may not I occasionally accompany my sister Jane?" A blush suffused the cheeks of Emily, and her eyes were cast on the ground; in a few moments, however, she fixed them with a look of unutterable sweetness and simplicity on her youthful admirer:—"Oh, yes," she tremulously replied, "Mr. Bellerdiston will not abuse the liberty I give him."—"May the honour of my ancestors," exclaimed Edward, looking around him, "desert me if I do! No, Miss Burton, here, before the tomb of my lamented parent," pointing to a beautiful monument over the grave of

Lady Bellerdiston, " and in the presence of her amiable daughter, my accomplished Jane, I hesitate not to declare, though at the risk, perhaps, of incurring the just charge of presumption, that to obtain your approbation, your esteem, shall be the object of my future life."

Scarcely had this avowal been made, when they reached the monument to which he had directed their attention, and Emily, willing to escape from the confusion which so unexpected a declaration had occasioned her, and struck at the same time by the strong resemblance which existed between the marble profile of Lady Bellerdiston, and the living features of her daughter, immediately, though in an agitated manner, noticed the similitude. The effect was, indeed, peculiarly striking; for the sculptor had represented an elegant female figure bending over the bust of the departed in the attitude and with the feeling of the deepest sorrow; and before them apparently stood the animated original of both. Nature had bestowed on Jane one of the finest of her forms; to a figure tall and rather full, yet moulded with the utmost symmetry and grace, she had added a

countenance Grecian in its outline, and highly beautiful in its expression; — it was a beauty, however, less fascinating, less sweet, less enthusiastically tender, than that with which she had gifted the more susceptible Emily; but it was yet powerfully interesting; and in the full blue eye, the expanded forehead, and open benignity of the mouth, dwelt indications of intelligence which could not be mistaken, of a tempered sensibility which could not but be admired. The latter had been called forth, in a more than usual degree, by the appeal of her brother, and the remark of her new friend, and the thought of being torn, perhaps for ever torn, from the image and the grave of her whom she had so long revered, so truly loved and honoured, seemed like a second separation. A convulsive sigh, an inward struggle, spoke the acuteness of her sensations; and Emily, conscious that she had, in some measure, contributed to their poignancy, turned suddenly round, and, addressing Edward, requested he would lead them to the tomb of Sir Hildebrand Bellerdiston; for that she had been not only interested by its feudal costume and antiquity, but was anxious to learn of him some ex-

planation of an incident which had there occurred to her father and herself. "Yes, it was here," she continued, as they reached the place, "that whilst contemplating this recumbent figure, and the sculptured episode beneath it, we were surprised and riveted to the spot by strains of the most delicious music, which whether they originated in the earth or in the air, above us or beneath us, we found it difficult to ascertain.

Edward and his sister smiled at each other during this recital, and were about to enter into an explanation, when the sound as of distantly approaching horsemen arrested their attention. They paused to listen, and distinctly heard the trampling of steeds along the avenue, and presently the voices of several persons at the portal of the great court. It was now getting quite dusky, and the arrival of such a numerous party, and at such an hour, occasioned no small consternation to both Emily and her friends, but particularly to the latter, who were, as might be expected, alive to every thing that seemed to threaten the safety of their father. They were instantly about to retire, when

Emily, representing to them their perfect security, at least for the present, said, " that if they would remain where they were for a few minutes, she would hasten into the Priory, inform herself of what had given rise to this visit, and return to them immediately." The offer, as tending to remove suspicion and doubt, was gladly accepted, and Emily flew, eager to ascertain the cause of such an unexpected interruption, and anxious to dissipate the apprehensions of those whom she had left.

She found her father just returned from a conference with the strangers in the hall, who, he said, " were part of the retinue of Colonel Haselford, and had preceded him to say, ' that he was coming to consult a brother soldier on business of importance, and would take a bed at the Priory.' I have, therefore, given directions," he continued, " to have the banqueting room prepared for our evening meal, and the abbot's chamber gotten ready for the reception of our guest at night. But where are your friends, my love? I trust they are in a place of security." Emily mentioned her arrangement with them. " Fly to them immediately," he

proceeded, "and say whom we are about to receive. Edward too well knows the character of this ambitious republican, a man of blood, and void of all principle.

Emily waited not for any farther intimation, but instantly rejoining her companions, told them all the information she had acquired. Edward started at the name of Haselford; the blood mounted with indignation into his cheeks, and he could scarcely avoid invocating vengeance on his head; "yet this is no place," he exclaimed, "for the indulgence of enmity, however just. Farewell, Miss Burton, we retire, soon, I trust, to meet again. — But did you not say," he added, "that this merciless man was to sleep in the abbot's chamber?" — "I did," replied Emily; who now turning to Jane, bade her fondly adieu, whispering, at the same time, "that if she would meet her in the morning before breakfast at Lady Bellerdiston's cenotaph, they could then concert a a plan for future intercourse." A smile and pressure of the hand were returned as the tokens of assent, and Emily, after watching the retreat of her friends, as they at first gradually

receded from the eye, and at length suddenly disappeared near an angle of the southern aisle, rejoined her father.

It was not long before the arrival of Colonel Haselford was announced, and Emily, begging her father would spare her the pain of receiving a man whose very name she had never heard without terror, retired to her own room. Nothing, indeed, could be more contrasted than the character and conduct of the two officers who now met beneath the roof of Kirton Priory. For whilst patriotism, and a love of regulated liberty, however warped by enthusiasm and the factious spirit of the times, had been the never-forgotten principles which had animated the breast, and directed the actions of Colonel Burton, the career of Haselford had but too plainly shown that mere self-aggrandising ambition, and despotism under the mask of republicanism, were the only objects he held steadily in view. The constitutional dispositions of the two men were also diametrically opposite; mild and generous feelings, an admiration of the private character of his sovereign, and a wish to spare him in his public

capacity, had uniformly influenced the heart and the councils of Burton, but in the bosom of Haselford, not only had cruelty and ferocity exerted a general sway, there had also been superadded an individual hatred of the person of his king. It was not probable, therefore, that men whose public views and private sentiments were so dissimilar, should unite in any one important object; but the talents of Colonel Burton, both as a statesman and a soldier, were so well known, and had been so highly appreciated by Cromwell, that Haselford, who had left London under the conviction that the protector had not long to live, was extremely desirous of securing his co-operation in the measures which such a crisis had induced him to form. After stating then that the protector was not likely to survive many days; he represented to Colonel Burton the total incapacity of Richard, his probable successor, both for the senate and the field, and the opportunity that would consequently soon be afforded to a few capable and enterprising spirits for securing the direction of the government. He therefore proposed that they should conjointly anticipate

what he knew would be soon attempted by others, declaring his firm belief that, powerful as their interest was with the army, they might, by striking a decisive blow on the decease of Cromwell, place the nation at their feet.

To a man heartily sick as Colonel Burton was of revolutionary measures, and who was now convinced that nothing but a return to the regular monarchy could save the country from anarchy and utter ruin, the proposal of such a design, especially when originating with a military character of so daring and ambitious a temper as Haselford, was peculiarly offensive. Instead, therefore, of listening to the overtures of the sanguine demagogue with the complaisance which had been eagerly expected, he began a warm and decided remonstrance against the very tenor and conception of the project; pointing out in the strongest terms, the iniquity of the scheme, the violence which must attend its progress, and the misery which would follow its completion. So strong, indeed, had the conference, which was carried on in the library become, that Emily, who, from the situation

of her room, could distinguish the loudness of the altercation, trembled for the result. Fortunately, however, the announcement of supper gave a temporary pause to the dispute, and the combatants sat down to their meal in the lofty banqueting-room of Kirton Priory, with countenances suffused with wrath; nor was the discussion which took place after their refection, in any degree less conciliatory; in short, they separated for the night under feelings of mutual hostility and contempt, Colonel Haselford, as he retired to his chamber, ordering his horses to be gotten ready for his journey early in the morning.

"May Heaven defend my country," exclaimed Colonel Burton, as his visitor closed the door, "from rulers such as these!" an ejaculation which was followed by many melancholy meditations on the approaching crisis. In a few days, thought the Colonel, as he sank into his elbow chair before the fire in a state of reverie, will the fate of this distressed empire be again at issue. Torrents of blood may again flow, and even the stability, the compulsory repose which Cromwell had established upon the ruins of

the constitution, may be sought for in vain! Alas! how much, with all his faults, have we had reason to regret the loss of the unfortunate Charles! As he uttered this reflection half aloud, with his eyes fixed in a state of abstraction either on the fire or the picture of lady Jane Gray, or on the wainscot adjoining, the wind, which had been for some time rising, shook the room, and his attention was shortly excited by a somewhat peculiar shrill sound which seemed to issue from the great oak panel on the left of the fire-place. This, at length, he saw, or fancied he saw, whenever the storm blew stronger than usual, distinctly move, till at last, determined to satisfy his curiosity on the point, he rose from his chair, and, on examining the part whence the noise had proceeded, he perceived by evident marks, that both over it, and over the corresponding wainscot on the other side of the chimney-piece, large pictures had been placed, and recently withdrawn. The left-hand panel, however, which, when confined by its former furniture, had probably given no intimation either to the eye or ear, seemed now visibly looser than the other, and

not only shook on being touched, but, by affording a narrow vent for the air round a portion of its inner edge, had, no doubt, occasioned the sharp plaintive sound which had at first attracted the Colonel's notice.

That no other panel in the room, however, but this, should be loose, naturally suggested the idea of contrivance, and induced him to re-examine it with more particular attention. The result was the discovery of a spring so artfully concealed in the moulding of the wainscot, that but for the perseverance of the Colonel, and the close approximation of a waxen taper, it must entirely have escaped detection. Replacing, therefore, the light on the table, he now endeavoured, by pressure on this spring, to effect the opening of the panel; but, from disuse, both the spring and the machinery connected with it had become so clogged with dust, that when, after much exertion he succeeded in depressing it, some moments elapsed before any movement followed. At length he observed the panel opening from above very slowly, and descending through the floor. Impatient to unfold the mystery which he had no

doubt lay hid beyond it, he used every effort to accelerate its declension, at the same time intently looking forward as it gradually fell, into a square room partially illumined by the rays of the moon, which streamed faintly and by fits through a narrow high-placed window, or loop-hole, immediately opposite. The obscurity, however, being still such as not to admit of any accurate discernment of objects at that distance, the Colonel, after a minute's pause, entered the place. Here, however, he had advanced but a few feet, when he was struck motionless by the dim outline of a human figure with its back towards him, apparently kneeling, and in the act of prayer. He stood gazing on this vision until his eyes, accustomed to the gloom, could somewhat more distinctly perceive what looked like a living form; but as no notice had been taken of his intrusion, nor had the devotions of the seeming suppliant been for an instant disturbed, he hesitated whether to consider it as a being of this or of another world. Yet, determined to satisfy his curiosity, which had now become painfully eager, he ventured on a nearer approach, endeavouring to procure a side view

this mysterious stranger. In doing this, his astonishment was further excited by the lustre of a star and garter, and by certain resemblances in the dress which struck him with peculiar awe; particularly by the appearance of a large pearl suspended from the left ear *; but resolute in his design, he passed on, until coming parallel with his object, a sensation of indescribable horror seized him, as the moon, bursting bright from a dark cloud, poured her light full upon the elevated face of the figure, and he beheld the features of the murdered Charles! That pensive and devotional sweetness of countenance, those premature grey locks, and that very air and manner which had characterised the martyred monarch, were before him! A groan of agony, the first effect of the recognition, burst from his lips; and, unable any longer to contemplate what, for the moment, he be-

* In Sir Peter Lely's copy of the original picture of Charles by Vandike, there is in the ear of the monarch a pearl which he constantly wore; and from this picture Bernini worked his celebrated bust.

Vide Granger's Biographical History, Vol. ii. p. 88. Edition of 1775.

lieved to be the disembodied spirit of his late sovereign, he rushed staggering out of the room, drew up the panel, and threw himself almost breathless into a chair.

On a mind so constituted as was Colonel Burton's, so peculiarly liable to excitement from sources connected with his habitual study of the wonderful and preternatural, the impression arising from this singular incident was nearly overwhelming. He remained motionless for some time, his face covered with his hands, and when he at length looked up, the forms of the dead were around him!

To these spectral illusions, a species of mental hallucination, he had long been subject. A creative imagination, an ardent but misguided thirst for knowledge, disappointed hopes and gloomy prospects, operating on delicate health and irritable nerves, had originally given birth to this visionary influence, which no after-exertion of judgment or volition could so eradicate, but that the recurrence of any extraordinary event, or sudden misfortune, would bring it into play. Indeed his addiction to the line of reading we have mentioned, was of itself

sufficient to keep alive this morbid sensibility, of which he severely felt the effects, without possessing sufficient resolution to relinquish one of its most efficient causes. The fascination was in fact, so complete, that though both reason and experience had taught him that these appearances, which were liable to recur at all hours of the day and night, were but the coinage of the brain, the result of mere nervous irritation, yet he had in vain struggled to emancipate himself from their power, a power alike destructive of his health and peace of mind, and to which he had hitherto submitted in awful silence, unwilling to communicate what might either prove equally pernicious to others, or subject himself to the charge of mental imbecility.

The apparition, however, which he had just seen, and which he distinctly felt, was in its nature different from those phantoms by whom he was usually haunted, had so strongly excited his imagination, that the seeming forms of the departed, now rising before him, became so unwontedly vivid and material to his eye, that unable any longer to endure their visitation, he

hurried out of the room, trusting that, in the presence of his daughter, he should be less liable to their intrusion.

Though past midnight, he found Miss Burton still sitting up; for, anxious as to the issue of any discussion between two characters so discordant in opinion, and alarmed at the angry tone in which she had heard their conversation carried on, she had waited with impatience the arrival of her father; and no sooner did she hear his footsteps in the gallery, than she hastened to meet him. Shocked at the wild and agitated expression of his features, she eagerly inquired into what had occasioned him so much disturbance; and, thrown off his customary guard by the perturbed state of his feelings, he unconsciously revealed what, under other circumstances, he would have been careful to conceal.

Mysterious and extraordinary as was the account of the secret chamber and its awful inhabitant, it was felt by Emily as of slight moment, when compared with those indications of mental aberration, which escaped in hurried accents from her father's lips. He seemed

placed, as it were, in a world of his own, peopled by the shadows and phantoms of the grave; and it was some time before her affectionate assiduities could so far recal him from these direful abstractions as to converse with calmness and self-possession.

Of the infirmity now unveiled before her, and which she could not behold without a kind of shuddering terror, she had long entertained suspicions. The looks, indeed, the exclamations, the frequent startings of the Colonel, his solicitude to conceal their cause, his anxiety to guard her against superstitious feelings, and the very particular care which he always took to prevent her indulging in the line of reading to which he was himself addicted, had, at times, almost necessarily awakened apprehensions in her mind, that he himself suffered from the very sources of delusion which he deprecated in others. The result of the last few hours had confirmed her fears, and she endeavoured, by every soothing means, to allay the intellectual fever to which so singular an incident had given birth. She represented to him how highly probable it was, that some part of Sir Gregory's

family could well account for the spectacle he had witnessed, and which, as occurring in a place evidently set apart for some peculiar purpose, was, in all likelihood, the effect of art; expressing, at the same time, and in the tenderest manner, her warmest hopes, that he would, in future, sedulously avoid whatever from experience he knew was liable to excite in any degree emotions and perceptions similar to those which the unfortunate discovery of this night had called into existence; adding, with an arch look but tearful eye, that she was afraid she must serve him as the barber and curate had served Don Quixote, that is, steal into his library and burn his books.

"My dearest Emily," he replied, "it is now in vain to deny what the events of this night have but too evidently disclosed, that your unhappy father is, at times, the victim of diseased imagination. Various misfortunes, public and private, pressing on a mind heated and inflamed by religious enthusiasm, and the reveries of a mystical philosophy, were, I have no doubt, the origin of this calamity; till so morbidly sensitive have I at length become to

all impressions, that any mental anxiety, or even any bodily disorder influencing the nervous system, will induce a species of intellectual ecstacy or abstraction so acutely vivid, that ideas and recollections start, as it were, into bodily existence, and, in spite of any counteracting effort of volition, crowd around me in all the mockery of reality. I have hitherto endeavoured, and, I think, with tolerable success, not only to screen this infirmity from your observation, but to guard you against the possibility of incurring, from like causes, any similar infliction. The extraordinary incident, however, which has just occurred, has broken in upon my plan, and laid bare the secret of my soul. Alas! who could have beheld unmoved, with unblanched cheek or steady nerve, the departed spirit, as it seemed, of such a sufferer? Think, then, what must not I have felt, who, though not loaded with the actual guilt of his murder, yet contributed indirectly to that deplorable event! — But, hark! what noise was that?"

A loud cry of "lights; lights," was here distinctly heard, though uttered in a wild and

convulsed tone of voice. Presently the sound as of a person suddenly falling, and succeeded by heavy groans, echoed through the Priory. Colonel Burton, roused by what seemed the accents of distress, and ever ready to assist where danger or disaster called, quickly snatched a light, and recommending his daughter to remain where she was, hastened through the gallery, on opening the door of which he beheld prostrate on the steps leading from the abbot's chamber, immediately opposite, the body of his turbulent guest. He was, however, only stunned by the violence of his fall; and no sooner had he recovered, by the help of the Colonel, and his own servants, who had been summoned to his aid, the faculty of speech, than, glancing his eyes round him with an expression of indescribable horror, and dismay, he exclaimed in half-broken accents of despair: "Have mercy on me, Heaven! See where it gleams again, the glitter of that descending axe! I feel his blood gush warm upon me! — I did it not; thou canst not say I gave the fatal stroke!" Then, clasping his head with his hands, he shrieked aloud "Lo! where in mockery it comes!

that diadem of fire will consume me to the brain!" — This effort, however, was soon followed by the powers of recognition; and, after steadily surveying the party with a sullen and revengeful brow, he issued immediate orders for his departure, condescending, at the same time, though with an air of malice in his look, to request a few moments' conversation with his host.

"By him that made me, Colonel Burton," he exclaimed, as they entered the tapestried room below, "I would not stay another hour in this cursed mansion of yours for the wealth of India!" — "I am sorry, Sir," muttered the colonel" — "Sorry," re-echoed Haselford, interrupting his apology, "why, Sir, the place is haunted by a legion of fiends! Had I met the living tyrant single-handed in the field, though backed by a thousand of his slaves, I had not shrank from the encounter; but, to see him as I did last night." — "See whom?" cried his shuddering auditor.

"Scarcely, Colonel Burton," continued Haselford in a repressed tone of voice, "scarcely had I sank to sleep, after long and painful

meditation on what had occurred between us, when I was suddenly awakened by a sound more dismal than I ever listened to; it seemed the wailings of lamentation mixed with agonizing groans, and by fits was heard the low and interrupted cry of treason and of murder! — Starting at these fearful intimations, I sate upright in my bed; and, while endeavouring to shake off what I, at first, thought must have been the mere impression of a dream, the spirit, the very form and person of our late monarch stood before me! Never, no never shall I forget the look, the expression of that countenance! It seemed to blast and wither up every faculty of my soul, till, unable any longer to endure the unutterable torment of its presence, I sprang with convulsive horror to the door of the apartment, and fell senseless where you found me. Yet, dreadful as this visitation had been felt, it was, I think, exceeded by the terrors which surrounded me on first recovering from the effects of the fall. — Methought I was present at the execution, that I saw —," here the narrative of the agitated traitor was broken in upon by the entrance of servants, announcing

that his horses were at the portal of the Priory, when, indignant at the weakness he had betrayed, and still burning with resentment towards the Colonel; he rushed without further ceremony from the room, leaving his late auditor for some moments fixed to the spot, and in a state of mind in which it was difficult to ascertain whether awe, astonishment, or apprehension most prevailed.

(*To be continued.*)

No. XIII.

Meæ, si quid loquar audiendum,
Vocis accedet bona pars.

HORATIUS.

If voice of mine e'er live to distant days,
For thee that voice shall breathe the note of praise.

THAT the fervor of imagination, which gives birth to poetical imagery and association, is not unfrequently developed at a very early period of life, and sometimes even connected with a large share both of taste and judgment, has been ascertained by some very striking instances in our own language. Both *Milton* and *Pope* exhibited this precocity and combination of talent; and in more modern times a like union has been exemplified in a still higher degree of vigour and completion.

That poems such as are those of the unfortunate *Chatterton*, exhibiting so much splendour of fancy, and power of expression, so much

beauty and variety of versification, such indications of research and grasp of intellect, could have been the productions of a youth who perished at the age of seventeen, and under circumstances, too, of penury and distress highly adverse to their formation, was a phenomenon which nothing but actual experience could have reconciled to our ideas of the progress and expansion of the human faculties.

Scarcely less extraordinary has been the still later instance of early and highly-gifted genius in the person of the late amiable *Kirke White*, who, though he lived to see but the dawn of his twenty-first year, had long suffered under the pressure of disease, which he felt was to terminate but in the grave,—in the extinction, as to this world, of those very powers for which he had sacrificed his health, though not, as in the case of the unhappy Chatterton, his peace of mind; for, of the invaluable consolations which are afforded by undeviating morality, and a firm religious faith, he was in full possession to the last moment of his existence.

Than some of the effusions of this accomplished youth, whether their imagery or their

sentiment be considered, there are few things more exquisitely beautiful or touchingly sweet in the compass of our poetry, especially those pieces in which he alludes to his melancholy prospects and approaching fate. There can be little doubt, indeed, that if he had not thus prematurely fallen a martyr to his ardent love of literature and science, he would ultimately have taken his station with the first of our bards.

To these remarkable examples of early excellence in the field of modern poetry, I now venture to add a living instance in the person of *Mr. Henry Neele*, to whom, I trust, a much longer date, will be assigned for the cultivation of his talents, than fell to the lot of his two immediate predecessors. This youthful candidate for fame, with whom I am only acquainted through the medium of his writings, published about three years ago, a small volume under the title of "Odes, and other Poems."* Of

* Odes, and other Poems. By Henry Neele. London: Printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, Paternoster-Row." 1817.

these productions, which, from their dates appear to have been written between the fourteenth and seventeenth years of their author's age, the merit strikes me as being so considerable as to justify the notice and the praise which I feel gratified in having an opportunity of bestowing upon them.

They occupy a duodecimo of 144 pages, and are classed under the heads of *Odes*, *Sonnets*, and *Miscellaneous Poems*; the latter division, as well as the two prior parts, being altogether of a lyrical complexion.

Perhaps no branch of poetry, either in our own or any other language, demands a rarer junction of taste and talent than the greater ode; for, towards the attainment of excellence in this department, it is vitally necessary that to the most lofty enthusiasm and creative fancy, be added the utmost purity, and choice of expression, together with every graceful variety, and felicitous adaptation, of melody and rhythm; requisites which are often too conflicting for coalescence, and are, at all times, indeed, with great difficulty blended. Few, therefore, in any age or nation, are

those who have encircled their brows with this wreath of immortality; and when, in our own country, we have recorded three or four names of great and deserved celebrity, it will be found that the catalogue has been exhausted.

Well, therefore, might Mr. Neele say in his preface, that "to tread in the steps of such men is a bold attempt." It is one, indeed, which has seldom been justified by any considerable degree of success; but, in the present instance, so much has been attained; so many passages in the true tone and spirit of lyrical inspiration are scattered through the collection, as to warrant the assumption, or, at least, the pleasing expectation, that nothing but maturer years, and further practice, will be required to place this young disciple of the muses in the rank which his genius and ambition seem to claim.

Among those masters of the lyre whom he appears to have worshipped as the guides and companions of his course, he most nearly approaches to Collins, both in the cast of his composition, and the general colour of his sentiment. The same love of allegory, the same

plaintive wildness of fancy, and not seldom the same simple and touching pathos which have immortalised the bard of Avon, may be traced in the compositions of Mr. Neele.

A character so high, and applied moreover to the effusions of a youth of sixteen, will necessarily require very decisive proofs for its substantiation; yet I proceed with little doubt or fear, to place these before my readers, confident that with those who are most competent to judge will be found the most favourable award.

The *Odes*, which are twelve in number, but divided into two books, are, like those of Collins, chiefly employed on subjects of an abstract nature, and may, on that account, as was the case with the productions of that exquisite poet, more slowly arrest the popular attention; but their beauties will assuredly in time be duly felt and understood.

That melancholy which so often pervades the higher efforts of poetical genius, and which was intimately blended with almost every thought of Collins and Kirke White, has shed its sombre tints over nearly the whole of Mr. Neele's poetry; and the *Ode to Time*, which

opens his little volume, furnishes him with a subject but too productive of materials for the indulgence of this predisposition; nor is that addressed to *Hope*, which immediately follows it, though on a theme less likely to admit of mournful associations, of a more consolatory complexion. Yet the opening stanza admits, in its fullest extent, the delightful, but too often delusive influence of this flattering passion, and it is impressed upon us in terms of great energy and beauty:

Sun of another world, whose rays
  At distance gladden ours;
Soul of a happier sphere, whose praise
  Surpasses mortal powers;
Mysterious feeling, taught to roll
  Resistless o'er the breast,
Beyond embrace, above controul,
The strangest, sweetest of the soul,
  Possessing, not possest.

It is the purport, however, of the subsequent stanzas to detect the fallacies of this never-failing yet ever-necessary deluder, till, at length, the

poet is reduced, as the only source of consolation, to exclaim,

> Why mourn the absence of that light,
> That only led astray?

yet allowing, at the same time, with the experience which attaches to us all, that this light, though deceptive, had been, nevertheless, bright and cheering, and had "gilded all our way;" a confession which naturally introduces the following wildly plaintive, yet highly poetical close:

> Yes; he who roams in deserts bare,
> That were not always wild,
> Will sigh to think how sweetly there
> Full many a flow'ret smil'd,
> Will pause to mark th' uncherish'd beam,
> The tree uprooted torn;
> And sit immers'd in pensive dream,
> By many a now deserted stream,
> To meditate and mourn.

The succeeding poem, which is inscribed *To Memory*, proceeds upon the same plan of recording the pains rather than the pleasures of the subject; and, after painting in strong co-

lours the misery which awaits the retrospect of guilt,

> When to the heart untam'd, will cling
> The memory of an evil thing,
> In life's departing hour,

he laments that, even the loveliest pages in Memory's book "which past enjoyment can bestow," are unavailing in their power to mitigate the pangs of present pain and sorrow. Mournfully sweet as are the lines which illustrate this remark, I much wish the young poet had endeavoured to dispel some portion of the gloom which now totally envelopes his lyre, by some record of the consolation which ever follows the remembrance of good deeds. The contrast would have been morally as well as poetically delightful, as not only opposed to the reminiscences of guilt and despair, but to the inefficiency of mere recollected pleasure; the passage is, however, as I have just observed, pre-eminently beautiful:

> For e'en in thought's serenest hour,
> When past delights are felt,

And memory shines on scenes of woe,
'Tis like the moon-beam on the snow,
That gilds but cannot melt;
That throws a mockery lustre o'er,
But leaves it cheerless as before.

Her sweetest song will only tell
Of long departed noon;
Of things we lov'd, alas! how well;
And lost, alas! how soon;
For feelings blasted, hopes deferr'd,
And secret woes unseen, unheard,
By the cold crowd around,
Will rise, and make their plaintive moan,
And mingle with her softest tone,
Till in their murmurs drown'd,
Her lyre shall lose its soothing flow,
And only tell a tale of woe.

Of the three remaining Odes of the first book, which are entitled *To Horror*, *To Despair*, and *To the Moon*, the first and third are finely contrasted in their subject, their imagery, and their style. Mr. Neele, like his great predecessor, sacrifices at the shrines both of pity and terror, and his notes awakening fear are not less potent than those which call forth the

tears of sympathy and sorrow. He is one of those gifted mortals

> —— to whom the world unknown,
> With all its shadowy shapes, is shown.

And he evidently possesses the faculty of communicating in all their primal strength and heart-withering force, the appalling impressions resulting from this visionary intercourse. Had the following lines from the "Ode to Horror," been found in the pages of Collins, they would not have been thought to derogate from the genius of that powerful bard.

> — Yonder come the spectre guard
> Who gibber in the dark church-yard,
> Obscure the moon's refulgent ray,
> And scare the traveller from his way.
> And now they come, a sweeping train,
> From fell, from flood, from fire, from rain,
> Around the mystic fire to trip,
> Lay the lean finger on the lip,
> To look the tale that none must speak,
> To hide the deed that none must seek. —

These, Horror, these the circle dire,
Who form around thy midnight fire,
Where side by side a withering band,
Plying their mystic trade they stand;
Thy influence on those nights of fear,
Binds high and low, spreads far and near,
Thy step is seen on every glade,
Thy voice is heard from every shade,
The timid weep, the pensive sigh,
The infant starts it knows not why;
The dreamer wakes from pangs so deep,
So fierce, he fears again to sleep,
The traveller trembling, totters on,
Breathes many a prayer, heaves many a groan,
Fears all he hears, doubts all he sees,
And starts and shakes with every breeze.

The sweet and soft repose which characterises the greater part of the "Ode to the Moon," is with great propriety clothed in the chaste and solemn cadences of the blank ode, a form of metre in which our young poet seems to move with peculiar grace and facility. This is the more fortunate, as even among our best lyrical bards, it is rarely that an attempt of the kind has succeeded. With the exception, indeed,

of the well-known ode of Collins, and one or two subsequent attempts in the same metre, we have nothing which can be offered as a model of blank lyrical rhythm. With what taste and skill Mr. Neele has overcome the difficulties attending this not very popular species of the English ode, will be seen with some surprise, and no little pleasure, from the opening of his poem, in which every ear must feel how accordant is the march and construction of the verse with the sublime yet tranquil imagery of which it forms so happy a medium.

How beautiful on yonder casement pane
The mild moon gazes! Mark
With what a lonely and majestic step
She treads the heavenly hills;
And oh! how soft, how silently, she pours,
Her chasten'd radiance on the scene below,
And hill, and dale, and tow'r,
Drink the pure flood of light.

II.

Roll on, roll thus, Queen of the midnight hour,
For ever beautiful!

The poet then, after descanting on the misery and wretchedness of the orb which his favourite planet so sweetly illumines, employs the last three stanzas in the far more grateful task of enquiring into the ultimate object and utility of a world, at present known only to man by its peaceful and benignant light.

There is something inexpressibly soothing and consolatory in imagining the surface of this lovely planet to be trodden by beings, innocent, and happy, and immortal; in conceiving it to be the chosen abode of angels and disembodied spirits, as a place of refuge and repose for those who have suffered much and undeservedly on earth, who have perished the silent victims of penury, contumely, and neglect. Hopes such as these are naturally felt and cherished by him, who, alive to all the finer sensibilities of our nature, looks up to this tranquil luminary while sinking beneath the pressure of unmerited calamity; and occasionally have such feelings and aspirations met with powers of expression commensurate to their worth, and capable of arresting their evanescency. Among this happy

few, will the lines we are about to quote, most assuredly place our present poet.

VI.

What art thou? from thy orbit come those hordes
Of wild fantastic forms,
(Their crowns of pearly evening dew, their robes
Wrought by the gossamer,)
Who sport beneath thy beam? or is it there
That angels strike their silver harps, and call
The listening spheres around,
To join the mazy dance?

VII.

Perhaps thou art the future residence
Of genius wretched here:
Perhaps the poet and the minstrel, who
Have suffer'd, sunk, and died,
Released from mortal shackles flee to thee,
And warbling soft seraphic melodies
Their gentle spirits rove
At peace in thy mild sphere.

VIII.

If so, oh for some lunar paradise
Where I may think no more

Of earth and earthliness, unless, perchance,
When evening glooms below,
Sometimes to wander downward on thy beam,
To flit across the scenes I once admir'd,
And hover, and protect
The heads of those I lov'd.

The second series of our author's lyrical effusions embraces subjects of a much less sombre hue than the first; for, with the exception of an Ode to Pity, it consists of addresses to *Enthusiasm*, to *The Harp*, to *Fancy*, to *The Power of Poetry*, and to *Allegory*; themes which require a master's hand and glowing touch; and though occasionally the soul-subduing notes of sorrow are heard to breathe their wildly-plaintive measure, the general tone of this portion of the volume is, as it ought to be, of a more lofty and daring character.

Lyric poetry may be said to live and breathe but in the atmosphere of enthusiasm, and to take her station, therefore, with epic and dramatic poetry in the highest regions of Parnassus. The personification, consequently, of an element so essential to the art, might be expected to

awaken all the ardour of the gifted bard; nor will the strains which Mr. Neele has devoted to the subject be found wanting in that light from heaven which burns for ever at the shrine of this creative power. He invokes her from her "wild aerial home," and she attends his call: —

Hark! with what ecstatic fire
She strikes the deep resounding lyre:
Wake! all ye powers of earth and air,
Or great, or grand, or wild, or fair,
Wake! winds and waters; vocal be,
And mingle with the melody.——

On every rock the echo rung,
On every hill the cadence hung,
And universal nature smil'd
On scenes so fair, on notes so wild.
So soft she sung, she smil'd so fair,
So sweetly wav'd her radiant hair,
The passions ling'ring on their way,
Hung o'er the soft seraphic lay;
Mirth stopt his circle's giddy round,
To listen to the solemn sound;
And rapture rais'd her hands on high,
And roll'd her eyes in ecstasy.

Come, then, Enthusiasm, dwell
A heavenly guest with me;
And many a plaintive tale I'll tell,
And song I'll sing to thee.

When morning gilds the eastern skies,
Of thee the strain shall be,
And when the shades of evening rise,
I'll tune my harp to thee.

Warmed by the presence of the goddess, her votary now flies to his beloved *Harp;* but, in the ode which he has consecrated to its praises, scarcely has he touched the strings ere they melt into a requiem over the departed spirit of his admired Collins;

Where is thy heaven-strung lyre?
Oh! but to sweep a transient strain,
Or strike a wandering wire. —
" Yes," thy seraphic lay is o'er,
Thy airy reed shall sound no more,
Beneath the sod that covers thee,
Sleep all the powers of harmony.

He then mournfully inquires if there be none to emulate this hallowed bard; breathes trem-

blingly a wish to touch himself the neglected chords, and concludes his "Ode to the Harp" with a noble eulogium on the mighty and unrivalled genius of Milton. Most assuredly the muses frowned not on their youthful votary whilst he chaunted to his harp these lovely lines:—

And is there none to sweep the string,
Not one to rise on rapture's wing,
And shall the heavenly harp be found
Unstrung and useless on the ground?
Oh! might a trembling votary dare
To touch the chords neglected there,
Methinks one moment to beguile,
Success the daring deed should crown,
And tho' the muses did not smile,
They could not, would not wear a frown.

Then wake, wild harp, thy boldest strain,
And bid the poet live again;
Oh bid revive that sacred lay,
Which tun'd creation's natal day,
Which spread the earth from pole to pole,
And taught the planets how to roll.
Alas! that heavenly strain is gone,
On wings of wind the muse is flown,

The song is sung, the lay is o'er,
The harp has slept to wake no more.

Yes, it has slept to wake no more,
No more to all that charm'd before.
No more to strains the heavens inspire,
No more to all the poet's fire.
Some still with feet unhallow'd tread
The chambers of th' illustrious dead,
And, unreflecting where they stray,
Mimic the mighty master's lay.
But these are mortal, these are men,
Their harps but wake to sleep again.
While his has shook the dome of fame
And crown'd him with a lofty name,
Which, proudly register'd on high,
Shall never perish, never die.

The "Power of Poetry," furnishes another congenial theme for the display of Mr. Neele's talents. The same energy of feeling, and vigour of numbers which distinguish his Address to the Harp, are to be found in this eulogium of the noblest of the arts of man. After personifying the influence of poetry, and describing her descent, he paints her surrounded by the

passions, who, obedient to her magic call, had hastened to enjoy her smile or own her power, and who, accompanied by a thousand fantastic forms and air-born shapes, burst into songs of joy or grief, of rapture or despair, till the poet, perceiving all nature prostrate at the throne of this subduing power, adds his voice to the universal chorus, avows his uncontroulable attachment, and launches into a glowing and enthusiastic encomium on the fate and fortune of the genuine bard, on the honour which awaits him whilst living, and on the consecration of his memory when dead.

How does all nature honour thee,
Oh! heaven-descended poesy!
The hill, the dale, the heath, the grove,
The voice of nature and of love,
The burning thought, the breathing line,
That melts, that thrills, all, all are thine!
In every shape, in every vest,
Come, welcome to a votary's breast.
Come as a goddess, parent, king,
I'll worship, honour, homage, bring;
A helpless weeping fondling be,
A foster dear I'll prove to thee;

Or come a wandering harper wild,
By night and pathless plains beguil'd,
Strike at my soul for entrance fair,
And love and joy shall greet thee there.

The poet! hallow'd, honour'd name
The dearest, eldest child of fame,
While life remains green laurels grow,
A garland for the poet's brow,
But oh! what fairer flowers shall bloom,
Eternal round the poet's tomb:
The fairies all shall leave their cells,
Where love with peace and plenty dwells,
The mossy cave and sylvan grot,
To weep around the hallowed spot;
The seasons as they wander by,
With liberal hand and sparkling eye,
Shall pause to gaze on scene so fair,
And strew their sweetest garlands there;
And oft amid the night profound,
When solemn stillness reigns around,
The mystic music of the spheres,
Reveal'd alone to gifted ears,
In dirges due and clear, shall toll
The knell of that departed soul.

I have already noticed Mr. Neele's fondness

for allegorical imagery; a predilection undoubtedly springing from his warm and justly-founded admiration of the poet,

Who touch'd the tend'rest notes of Pity's lyre. *

And we are not surprised, therefore, to find him closing his second book of odes with one in praise of Allegory, and exclaiming in all the fervor of attachment,

Enchantress! who thy charms can tell?
Dark smiling maid! I love thee well.

The leading object of this beautiful address is to picture the prevailing influence of Allegory in reconciling the conflicting powers of truth and fiction. This is managed with uncommon skill and grace, and with a sweetness and delicacy of finishing, both in metre and manner, which reflects no small credit on the taste and judgment of the author.

Th' Enchantress came, she came in power,
Mistress of that transforming hour,

* Vide Hayley's Epitaph on Collins.

She breath'd a wild mysterious lay,
And sang and smiled their hate away.
O'er truth's fair form a robe she threw,
To clothe her with attraction new,
And plucked from fiction's pinions gay,
The vainer, gaudier plumes away: —
Each paused, each strange affection knew,
And wondered whence their hatred grew,
Felt fresh delight, beheld new charms,
And sunk into each other's arms:
Since then together will they stray,
And sing the same impassioned lay,
The flower that fiction's garden drest,
Blushes on truth's celestial breast;
The wires that truth has strung rejoice,
In unison with fiction's voice;
They seek the same romantic groves,
Each loves the haunts the other loves:
They climb the steep, explore the dell,
Together roam, together dwell. ——

Then, invoking the magic power of Allegory, he concludes the ode with the following emphatic lines: —

There's many a willing tribute paid,
In virtue's bane and vice's aid;

There's many a garland gay supplied,
For baseness, luxury, and pride,
For me! the song I raise shall be
Devoted to the muse and thee:
My garlands shall not, cannot twine
Around a brighter brow than thine.
I'll breathe thy praise, while praise has breath,
I'll love and cherish thee till death;
Till then I'm garlanding thy brow,
Till then I'll honour thee as now,
And then — farewell, dissolving spell,
Dark smiling maid! farewell, farewell!

The next division of Mr. Neele's volume, includes four sonnets, a species of composition difficult of execution, and in which many of our poets have failed. The specimens before us belong to the elegiac department, and do not exhibit the peculiar arrangement of what has been termed the legitimate Italian sonnet. Their construction, however, is not limited to mere alternate rhyme with a couplet at the close, the usual form of the English sonnet of this class, but is varied with considerable skill and effect. The fourth, especially, not only presents a pleasing metrical

system, but seems to me to possess a claim to originality, both in the choice and application of its imagery.

TRAVELLER, as roaming over vales and steeps,
Thou hast, perchance, beheld in foliage fair,
A willow bending o'er a brook — it weeps
Leaf after leaf into the stream, till bare
Are the best boughs, the loveliest and the highest;
Oh sigh, for well thou mayest, yet as thou sighest
Think not 'tis o'er imaginary woe;
I tell thee, traveller, such is mortal man,
And so he hangs o'er fancied bliss, and so,
While life is verging to its shortest span,
Drop one by one his dearest joys away,
Till hope is but the ghost of something fair,
Till joy is mockery, till life is care,
Till he himself is unreflecting clay.

The *Miscellaneous Poems* which close the collection, are in no degree inferior to those which have preceded them. The same beauty of expression and tenderness of feeling which have interested us so deeply in the odes, continue to attract and delight us throughout the whole of this division. Yet is it, with but two exceptions,

though consisting of not less than twelve poems, of a complexion still more pensive and desponding than any other part of the volume. The tones, however, which issue from the harp of this youthful complainant, are of such peculiar sweetness, so dwell upon the ear and touch the heart, that the effect, though depressing, is, at the same time, singularly grateful and soothing, producing, in fact, that mixed emotion which has been so happily designated by Ossian under the expression of "The Joy of Grief."

The plaintive flow of the versification of the subsequent stanzas from "*The Wanderer's Roundelay*," and the mournful sense of destitution which they convey, cannot but impress with sensations of sympathy the most thoughtless and volatile reader: —

II.

There was a time when joy ran high
And every sadder thought was weak,
Tears did not always dim this eye,
Or sorrow always stain this cheek;
And even now I often dream,
When sunk in feverish broken sleep,

Of things that were, and things that seem,
And friends that love, then wake to weep
That few must be
The tears for me,
When I am lain beneath the tree.

III.

——— no dirge for me will ring,
No stone will mark my lowly spot,
I am a suffering withering thing,
Just seen, and slighted, and forgot,
And few shall be
The tears for me,
When I am lain beneath the tree.

IV.

Yet . . . . . .
. . . . . there's room
For sorrow in the arms of death,
For disappointment in the tomb:
What tho' the slumbers there be deep,
Tho' not by kind remembrance blest,
To slumber is to cease to weep,
To sleep forgotten is to rest;
Oh sound shall be
The rest for me,
When I am lain beneath the tree.

I shall conclude these specimens of early excellence by a passage from the poem entitled "*Disappointment*," in which, whether the pathos, the imagery, or the expression be regarded, the most fastidious will find little to reprove, and the friends of opening genius much that will excite their admiration.

III.

Life is a fair, nay charming form,
Of nameless grace and tempting sweets,
But disappointment is the worm,
That cankers every bud she meets;
And when she finds a flower, the chief
Of others; more divine, more fair,
She crawls upon its loveliest leaf,
And feeds, and breeds, and riots there.

IV.

O heart! it is a sad employ,
The flowers we dare not cull to count,
From deserts gaze at fields of joy,
Barred from approach by main and mount;
To dream of bliss to come or past,
Of cheerful hearths and peopled halls,

Then wake and hear the hollow blast
Moan mournful through the ruined walls.

Such are the compositions which Mr. Neele has given to the world as written between the fourteenth and seventeenth years of his age. *

That they are possessed of great merit independent of any consideration of the early period at which they were produced, will not, I think, be denied by those who have attentively perused the preceding extracts; but when viewed in connection with the youth and inexperience of the author; when beheld as the very first-lings of his earliest years, they cannot but be deemed very extraordinary efforts, indeed, both of taste and genius, and as conferring no slight celebrity on their author, as the name next to be pronounced perhaps after those of Chatterton and Kirke White.

---

* Mr. Britton, the celebrated Historian of Gothic Architecture, informed me, in a letter which I received from him in February, 1819, accompanied by a copy of Mr. Neele's verses on the Bust of Shakspeare, that his young friend was but then about twenty years of age; consequently, as dates are annexed to the poems in Mr. Neele's Collection, the era of their composition can be pretty accurately ascertained.

There is something, however, I must remark, so touchingly mournful in the greater part of Mr. Neele's poetry, as to suggest an apprehension that, young as he is, he may have suffered more than usually attaches to the common lot. But let us trust his fame is not to be purchased at the expense of his health, or peace, or comfort; that he will not be, to adopt his own words, among the number of those "who come into the world to excite astonishment and delight in others, while their own lives are lost 'amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow,' — whose songs would have been less sweet, had their sorrows been less poignant, and who kindle the torch of immortality at the funeral pile of their own happiness." *

Of this aspiring votary of the Muses, indeed, I know nothing more than what I have just mentioned in a note as having been communicated to me concerning his age by Mr. Britton, nor has he the remotest idea or expectation of seeing any criticism on his poetry from my pen.

* Vide Preface, p. viii.

The notice, in fact, which I have been induced to take of his little volume, has been simply the offspring of my admiration of the feeling heart and vivid fancy which the whole cast and colour of his compositions so strongly indicate; and if, in so doing, I shall, in the smallest degree, contribute, in this age of poetical competition, to render his merit more conspicuous, my object will have been obtained.

H 3 94252

No. XIV.

Prevailing poet! whose undoubting mind
Believ'd the magic wonders which he sung!
Hence, at each sound, imagination glows!
Hence, at each picture, vivid life starts here!
Hence his warm lay with softest sweetness flows!
Melting it flows, pure, murmuring strong, and clear,
And fills th' impassioned heart, and wins th' harmonious ear!

COLLINS.

THERE existed in the character of *Torquato Tasso* such a tone of lofty enthusiasm, such a strength and fervor of fancy, so sublimated and exalted in its cast, as to afford to his cold and relentless persecutors a convenient pretext for the accusation of lunacy. *

* How exquisitely Lord Byron has expressed his conception of the enthusiastic feelings of Tasso, may be learnt from the following lines: —

It is to the same daring and excursive range of imagination, which seemed, in the eyes of his misjudging contemporaries, as something little short of madness, that we are indebted for the *Gerusalemme Liberata*, a poem which, as well in the texture of its composition, as in the complexion of its imagery and sentiment, is sustained throughout with so much warmth and ardour, and carries on its very surface the impress of such a majestic yet romantic spirit, as

——————— from my very birth
My soul was drunk with love, which did pervade
And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth;
Of objects all inanimate I made
Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,
And rocks, whereby they grew, a paradise,
Where I did lay me down within the shade
Of waving trees, and dreamed uncounted hours,
Though I was chid for wandering; and the wise
Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said
Of such materials wretched men were made,
And such a truant boy would end in woe,
And that the only lesson was a blow;
And then they smote me, and I did not weep,
But . . . . . to my haunt
Returned and wept alone, and dreamed again
The visions which arise without a sleep.

Lament of Tasso, p. 14.

to render any attempt at transferring its beauties, whether of style or thought, a task of very difficult execution.

It will occasion no surprise, therefore, to be told, that of those who have essayed to give an English dress to this visionary yet highly vigorous and enthusiastic poet, scarcely one can be said to have fully satisfied the wishes and expectations of the public.

The first effort which seems to have been made towards communicating to our countrymen a knowledge of this admirable poem, occurred towards the close of the sixteenth century, and about nineteen years after the first complete edition of the original had made its appearance in Italy. This version of a part of the Jerusalem is from the pen of Richard Carew, the author of the "Survey of Cornwall," and was published with the following title: "Godfrey of Bulloigne, or the Recoverie of Hierusalem. An heroicall poeme, written in Italian by Seig. Torquato Tasso, and translated into English by R. C. Esquire; and now the first part containing five cantos, imprinted in both languages." London, imprinted by John

Windet, for Christopher Hunt, of Exceter, 1594. It is a quarto of 235 pages, to which is prefixed an address to the reader, from the printer, Christopher Hunt, who tells us, that he "caused the Italian to be printed together with the English," in order that the "learned reader" might "see to how strict a course the translator had tyed himself in the whole work;" the very circumstance which has rendered the labours of his author of no effect: for it is an attempt, not only to preserve the stanza of the original, but to give nearly line for line, and word for word; an impracticable plan, which has led in this, as in every subsequent effort of a similar kind, to forced and imperfect rhymes, and to harsh and affected diction.

An entire, and in every respect a far superior translation, appeared four years after, from the pen of Fairfax *, and which, in fact, forms an era in the annals of English versification; for Waller has declared that he owed the music of

* "Godfrey of Bulloigne, or the Recoverie of Jerusalem:" printed by Ar. Hatfield, for J. Jaggard and M. Lownes, 1600. folio.

his numbers to the study of this version of Tasso. It is, indeed, if not the very best, yet a very noble specimen of metrical harmony for the period in which it was produced; and displays, likewise, in consequence of the numerous liberties which Fairfax has taken with his text, many indications of great original powers.

It is on this account, however, and notwithstanding it adheres to the *ottava rima* of the Italian poet, and that Hume has told us that "each line in the original is faithfully rendered by a correspondent line in the translation," by no means remarkable for its fidelity. Yet, had these deviations from the literal sense been always given in the spirit of his author, and with the splendour of imagination and felicity of expression which Fairfax sometimes exhibits, who would not have pardoned, nay, who would not have applauded the daring yet happy temerity of the translator. But it has unfortunately happened that by far the greater part of these aberrations from the text of Tasso are not improvements, but often in imagery, and still oftener in expression, beneath the dignity and chastity of the original. Time also has ob-

secured the general style of Fairfax in a much greater degree than has occurred to the first-rate original poets of his age; for I have no hesitation in asserting that he is now much more quaint and obsolete in his diction than either Sackville, Spenser, or Drayton; and his popularity, notwithstanding the attraction of his subject, has suffered accordingly.

Yet, with all these faults, such is the vigour and beauty of a multitude of passages which are faithful to the original; such the general spirit of the versification, and such occasionally the merit and congeniality of what he has added, that, until the recent publication of Mr. Hunt, it remained, as a version of the entire poem, altogether unrivalled.

Several attempts, however, have been made to supersede it, and had Mr. Brooke, who published a translation of the "First three books of Tasso," in 1738, finished what he had so happily commenced, there can be little doubt but that complete success would have been the result. But he was unfortunately diverted from the prosecution of his design by the intrusion of party politics.

It was reserved, therefore, for the pen of Philip Doyne, Esq. to give the next entire version of the Jerusalem, which was printed at Dublin, in two volumes 8vo., in the year 1761.*

This translation, which is one of the most unequal productions I have ever seen, is in blank verse, but constructed upon no regular metrical system. It would appear, indeed, that mere carelessness and inattention had been the origin of the gross deficiencies in language and versification with which almost every page presents us; for now and then we meet with passages finished in a style of perfect beauty and correctness, and glowing with poetic ardour. It is not unfaithful to the original; but such, in general, is the bald and prosaic cast of the diction, and so often is there a total want of all rhythmical cadence in the composition of the

* "The Delivery of Jerusalem; an Heroick Poem By Torquato Tasso. In twenty books. Translated into English blank verse, by Philip Doyne, Esq.; to which is added the Life of Tasso, and an Essay on the Gerusalemme Liberata." 8vo. 2 vols. Dublin: printed for G. and A. Ewing, in Dame-street, 1761.

verse, not even the customary quantity of ten syllables to a line being observed, that it is altogether impossible to read it through without disgust. The consequence has been that the volumes of Mr. Doyne have alike escaped the notice of the poet and the critic; and are now deservedly classed among the rarest of rare books.

Two years after this abortive effort appeared, the Tasso of Mr. Hoole, which has now for more than half a century been the only version in request. To the praise of smoothness of versification, elegance of diction, and a correct knowledge of the text of his author, he is, in general, fully entitled; but, on the other hand, he is throughout deficient in vigour and variety both of style and metre, and he sinks far below Fairfax in the display of those powers of fancy and expression which constitute the poet, and which, to ensure success, should be, and may be, rendered compatible with the province of the translator.

The field was, therefore, still sufficiently open for new adventurers; but it was not until the year 1797, that the public curiosity was

attracted to "Proposals for publishing by subscription, a new translation of the Gerusalemme Liberata. Dedicated to William Beckford, Esq. of Fonthill. By Susanna Watts."

To these proposals was annexed a specimen of the translation taken from the opening of the thirteenth book, and which, from its energy and fidelity, must have excited the warmest expectations in all who read it, that ample justice was at length about to be awarded to this noble poem, by a naturalization in our language that should rival the spirit and enthusiasm of the original.

Deeply, therefore, is it to be regretted that, from some unknown cause, for we will not for the honour of our country suppose that want of encouragement could occasion the failure, this admirable version, though ready for the press, has never appeared.

The prospectus and the specimen are now probably forgotten: but as the latter exhibits merit of so superior a kind, I will at least endeavour to bring it once more before the eye of the public.

It commences with the second stanza of the thirteenth book,

Sorge non lungi alle Christiane tende,

and terminates with the last line of the eleventh stanza,

Ene' tronchi albergare e tra le foglie:

and it should be remarked, as a proof that, poetical as this specimen is, it is by no means paraphrastic, that both the Italian and the translation occupy precisely the same number of lines.

Nigh where the Christian camp the hills inclose,
'Mid lonely vales a lofty forest rose;
Trees, old and horrid, thick beset the ground,
And shed a deep portentous shade around.
Here, when the sun shoots down his brightest beams,
A mournful, faint, discoloured twilight gleams;
Such the dim aspect of the cloudy sky,
When day and night at morn, or evening, vie.

But when the sun is sunk, with darkness dread,
Night, clouds and mists the vast extent o'erspread;

Infernal seem the shades — they smite, all drear,
The eye with blindness, and the heart with fear.
Here never shepherd guides his flock to feed;
Nor herdsmen here their hungry oxen lead;
No pilgrim enters — but with awe-struck eye,
And pointing finger, wheels and passes by.

Here WITCHES meet—on sailing clouds convey'd;
Each with her lover nightly seeks the shade;
Like a fierce dragon this terrific steers,
And that, in shape, an uncouth goat appears;
Assembly dire! — which baleful joys procure,
And while fallacious forms of bliss allure,
With pomp unclean and filthy rites ordain
Their impious nuptials and their feasts profane.

Thus all believe — what Syrian hand shall dare,
From the dread wood, one fatal branch to tear?
The Franks alone the dark recesses sought,
And hence the timber for their engines brought.
Here now th' ENCHANTER came — that hour he chose,
Meet for the deed! — of midnight's deep repose.
He girds his robe, and in the magic line
His circle forms, and prints each mystic sign;
One foot unshod, within th' enchanted round
He stands and mutters words of potent sound.

Thrice, with his visage turn'd, the east he greets,
Thrice the far regions, whence the sun retreats;
Thrice shakes the wand, which from the marble's side,
Drags forth the buried corse, and bids it glide.
Thrice with his naked foot he strikes the ground,
And thus in hideous yell his words resound.

"HEAR! HEAR!—O YE! whom from the starry "world
"The vengeful lightning of the Thunderer hurl'd!
"And YE!—wild wanderers, spirits of the air!
"Who rouse the whirlwinds, and the storms pre- "pare;
"And YE, who torture guilty souls below,
"Fell ministers of everlasting woe!
"Ye CITIZENS OF HELL! your aid I claim,
"And thine, great sovereign of the realms of flame!
"Take charge of this vast forest—instant seize,
"And guard with potent charm the number'd "trees—
"As lurks the soul within the body's cell,
"In each bard trunk let sep'rate spirits dwell;
"That the scar'd Franks may dread the wondrous "spell;
"Stay their rash strokes, nor try one plant to fell."

—— Then sounds he adds, for incantation meet,
Sounds, which no human tongue may dare repeat.
Astonish'd at the voice, each lamp of night
(Dread pow'r of magic!) gleam'd with pallid light:
The moon, disturb'd, her shining horns withdrew,
And veil'd in clouds, no more appear'd in view.

He now repeats the call, with tone severe,
" SPIRITS INVOKED! nor do ye yet appear?
" Perchance ye wait, and thus forego th' alarm,
" For words more potent, or more secret charm;
" Tho' long disus'd, full well I know t' impart,
" Each powerful order of the magic art.
" My tongue, defil'd with blood, that NAME can
" sound,
" The great, the dreaded NAME, whose note pro-
" found,
" Each trembling fiend with awful reverence fears,
" And Pluto's self is summon'd, when he hears.
" — Why dare ye thus delay? — Obey with
" speed —"
More had he spoke, but found the spell succeed.

Unnumber'd spirits to the wood repair;
Here speed the light-wing'd tribes that dwell in air;
And those who deep in earth's dark womb abide,
In realms of mist and darkness doom'd to hide:

ering they come, for still in mind they bore,
How Michael bade them join in fight no more.
But each, so work'd the charm, his charge receives,
Dwells in the trunks, or lurks within the leaves.

Nothing occurred to dissipate the sense of disappointment arising from the non-appearance of Miss Watts's Tasso, until the year 1818, when a new translation of the Jerusalem Delivered, was given to the world by the Rev. J. H. Hunt, A. M. *

There cannot be a doubt, I think, that this is, in every respect, greatly superior to any entire version of the Jerusalem, which has hitherto been given to the public. It is, in the first place, a faithful interpreter of the original, having neither assumed the licence of Fairfax, by the introduction of additional imagery; nor followed the example of Hoole, in omitting what was dubious in sense or difficult to transfer. The

* "Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered, an Heroic Poem; with Notes and occasional illustrations. Translated by the Rev. J. H. Hunt, A. M., late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. In two volumes." London: printed for J. Mawman, 39, Ludgate-street; by T. Miller, Noble-street, Cheapside. 1818.

versification too is, in general, spirited and harmonious; and there will be found in the more elevated parts of the copy no small tincture of that chivalric and romantic enthusiasm, which is so uniformly and so intensely the very life and soul of the original.

If we compare, however, Mr. Hunt's translation of the Enchantment of the Forest by Ismeno, with that which I have just given from the pen of Miss Watts, it must, I apprehend, be acknowledged, that though vigorous in parts, it is neither so highly finished, nor so uniformly sustained, as in the version of that lady. For instance, in the Invocation of the Infernal Spirits, to which nearly two incomparable stanzas are devoted in the Italian, the first has been rendered by Mr. Hunt, with an energy which leaves little to wish for; but in the second he is comparatively tame and nerveless, either when compared with the original, or with the lines of his fair predecessor. As justice, however, demands that the assertion be supported by due evidence, I shall transcribe the text of Tasso as well as the version of Mr. Hunt.

VII.

Udite, udite, o voi, che dalle stelle
Precipitar' giù i folgori tonanti:
Si, voi, che le tempeste e le procelle
Movete, abitator dell' aria erranti;
Come voi che alle inique anime felle,
Ministri sete degli eterni pianti,
Cittadini d'Averno, or qui v'invoco,
E te, Signor de' regni empj del foco.

VIII.

Prendete in guardia questa selva, e queste
Piante che numerate a voi consegno.
Come il corpo è dell' alma albergo e veste,
Cosè d'alcun di voi sia ciascun legno;
Onde il Franco ne fugga, o almen s'arreste
Ne' primi colpi, e tema il vostro sdegno.*

" Hear me, ye spirits, who of old were driv'n
" From the pure regions of your native heav'n!
" Ye, in the wide expanse of air who dwell,
" Who guide the tempest, and the storm compel!

* Gerusalemme Liberata Di Torquato Tasso. Illustrata Di Note, &c. Da Romualdo Zotti. Seconda Edizione, vol. ii. p. 151.

" And ye, who in the gloomy realms below
" Inflict on damned souls eternal woe
" You, citizens of Orcus, one and all,
" And thee, Hell's sable Emperor, I call!
" Entrusted to your care this wood shall be;
" Number'd with care, I give you every tree.
" As souls in forms corporeal dwell enshrin'd,
" So ye within these plants remain confin'd;"
Thus shall the Christian bands, appall'd, retire,
Arrest their palsied hands, and dread your ire. *

Here, I have no doubt, the reader will think with me, that even in the translation of the prior stanza, the first, seventh, and eighth lines are inferior to the corresponding ones of Miss Watts; but how is the imperative and energetic language of the original, the

Prendete in guardia questa selva, &c.

of the second, and which Miss Watts has so admirably translated by —

Take charge of this vast forest — instant seize
And guard with potent charm the number'd trees, &c. —

lowered in the couplets of Mr. Hunt.

* Hunt's Tasso, vol. ii. p. 92.

This inequality, in fact, runs through the greater part of the work; for while many passages in every canto are brought forward in a manner which reflects the highest credit on the taste, the judgment, and poetical powers of the translator, there are many unaccountably deficient, not in fidelity, nor often in the music of the versification, but in that peculiar tone of enthusiasm, both in thought and expression, which, whether the subject be pastoral or heroic, elevated or familiar, pervades in an unparalleled degree the whole Epopee of Tasso. Yet, notwithstanding these discrepancies of execution, I again repeat that this version of Mr. Hunt is, on many accounts, entitled to a decided preference over the translations of Fairfax and Hoole.

It is difficult, indeed, without actual example, to impress upon the mind of the mere English scholar a satisfactory idea of that enthusiastic ardor which burns in almost every line of the *Gerusalemme Liberata*. I shall, therefore, incur the *very hazardous* experiment of giving myself a translation of the first twenty-eight stanzas of the opening book, and

and professedly with the view of *endeavouring* to show, how even in the more subdued parts of this wonderful poem, the same glowing and almost unprecedented spirit, though less intensely bright, is still, however, vigorously and vitally at work.

I have chosen blank verse for this attempt, because I think it, beyond all comparison, better calculated to exhibit the peculiar feature in question than the couplet; and I must also premise, that where an expression, or a line of Fairfax has been deemed singularly beautiful, that expression or that line has been adopted.

Arms and the knight, the pious chief renown'd,
Who freed Messiah's hallow'd tomb, I sing:
Much wrought his foresight, much his valour wrought,
And much he suffer'd in that glorious toil!
In vain did hell sow discord, and in vain
The sons of Asia and of Lybia fought.
Heaven blest his efforts, and his erring ranks
Repentant gather'd round their banner'd lord.

Immortal muse! that not with fading wreathe
By Helicon's clear waters deck'st thy brow,

But sittest crowned with far-beaming stars
In heav'n, where legions of bright angels dwell,
Breathe thy celestial ardours thro' my breast,
And swell my harp to fame; nor blame me aught,
If fiction light with sacred truth I weave,
And fill these lines with other praise than thine.
Thou know'st with what delight ingenuous minds
Drink the sweet accents of the poet's song,
That truth severe with flowing verse adorn'd,
Can soften and can move the hardest hearts:
So give we to an infant when it droops,
The cup, whose brim is bath'd in luscious sweets;
And thus deceiv'd, he drinks the bitter draught,
And health, once more, relumes his faded cheek.

O Prince belov'd, Alphonso, great and brave,*
Thou, who from fortune's persecuting power
Hath rescu'd, and to safety's harbour led
Me, erring pilgrim, by the foaming waves
And surges lost, and found'ring in the deep;
To thee, these songs of glory and of love,
These grateful offerings of the muse, I bear;
Perchance, hereafter, the recording bard,

* Alphonso was the patron of Tasso. "Alfonso d'Este," says Zotti, "duca di Ferrara, a cui il Poeta dedica questo suo Poema, fu suo protettore e Mecenate."

Deeds such as now he sings, shall sing of thee.
For, should the Christian powers at length achieve
Concord among themselves, and strive by arms
To win from Othman's tyrant dynasty
The captive towers of Sion, thee as chief
Shall they elect, to lead their martial host,
Or wield the sceptre of dark ocean's realms.
O rival of great Godfrey! whilst thou read'st
His deeds of arms, the spear and shield assume.

Six seasons had swept by on rapid wing
Since first the red cross wav'd on eastern shores;
Nice by assault, and Antioch by surprise,
Had yielded to its sway, alike secure
Against the host immense of Persian tribes;
Till, having won Tortosa's massive towers,
They to the rigours of the wintry storm
Reluctant yield, and the blithe spring await.

Fled were at length the sullen hours that sheath'd
The sword of conquest in its mid career,
When the Almighty from his lofty throne,
Fix'd in the purest firmament of heav'n,
As high above the bright ethereal stars
As those stars are from hell's profoundest depth,
Look'd down, and in one momentary glance
The earth, and all that mov'd thereon, he saw.

Then on the Christian chiefs in Syria's fields
Contending, bent that eye, deep-searching, pure,
Which swift as light lays bare the heart of man,
And scans the secrets of his inmost soul:
Great Godfrey first he mark'd, who sought to chase
The barb'rous foe from Salem's holy towers,
And fill'd with zeal and faith, alike contemn'd
" The legion fiends of glory and of gold."
Then Baldwin next, ambitious, restless, proud,
Athirst for this world's greatness and renown;
Tancred, who, lost in love's bewitching thrall,
In lonely anguish mourn'd his slighted vows;
And Bœmond, legislator wise and good!
Who taught to Antioch with patriot zeal,
Obedience, order, liberty, and law;
To woo new arts, to light the infant mind,
To bend the knee, and bless the cross of Christ;
Views such as these the noble chieftain grac'd,
Absorb'd his days, and fill'd his nights with care;
And lastly, child of promise and high hope,
The young Rinaldo, beautiful and brave,
The love of glory burning in his breast;
Who, scorning wealth and ease, and sov'reign pow'r,
Sought only to secure the victor's wreath.
On Guelpho's tales of war entranc'd he hung,
Who fir'd his heart with deeds of ancient days,
And taught him to transcend his father's fame.

While thus the ruler of the world deep search'd
Each inmost secret of the warrior host,
Forth from the highest essences of heaven
Gabriel he summon'd, seraph mild as pure,
God and the souls of righteous men between
An ever faithful messenger of love!—
Oft as repentance seeks the throne of grace,
His the blest charge to speed the holy pray'r,
And when the Lord in mercy feels for man,
His the glad task to make that mercy known.

To him th' Almighty thus his will declar'd:
" Speed to Godfredo; in my name demand
" Why dost thou pause? O why to peace resign'd
" Sink'st thou supine, whilst Sion groans oppress?"
Instant to counsel let him call his peers,
And breathe deep ardor thro' each fainting breast;
Him have I chosen chieftain of their host,
Him shall they all obey, and firm in faith,
His fellows late shall form his subjects now.

He spoke; nor did th' angelic pow'r delay
With speed to execute the will of heav'n:
His viewless form a radiant shape assum'd,
And his pure spirit stood confest to sight;
In aspect, and in limb of human mould,
But yet with more than mortal beauty cloth'd;

A youth approaching manhood, graceful, tall,
And beaming splendour from his locks of gold.
Wings of a silv'ry lustre then he took,
Whose plumes were swift, whose edges stream'd with light;
Thus clad, with nimble pinions he divides
The circles broad, and lofty spheres of heav'n;
Till on the top of Lebanon he stood,
And shook his wings with roary May-dews wet.

Soon from that mount the holy angel flung
His flight impetuous to Tortosa's walls:
The glorious sun, yet scarcely half in view,
Above the eastern wave was glowing red,
And heaven's elected chieftain, ris'n from sleep,
Was kneeling to his god, for such at morn
His pious custom was, when with the sun,
Yet brighter than that sun, though shining bright,
The angel in the golden east appear'd.

Godfrey, he cried, behold the hour at hand,
The hour propitious for the work of war!

---

* This line, which is from Fairfax, has no exact counterpart in the original; but I have thought it too beautiful to be omitted. The Italian is as follows:

Pria sul Libano monte ei si ritenne.
E si librò su l'adegnate penne.

Then why delay, why hesitate to strike
And free Jerusalem from abject thrall?
Quick bid thy peers attend; the slothful rouse,
Assure the feeble, and confirm the strong.
Go thou, elect of heav'n, thy post assume,
And willing chiefs shall hail thee as their lord.
Thro' me Jehovah sends his high decree,
Thro' me the servant of almighty power.
Oh, what sure hope of conquest waits thy faith!
What zeal, what love should in thy bosom dwell!
He ceas'd, and to the highest heav'n of heav'ns,
Seats of eternal rapture, soar'd away.

Blind with excess of light, with wonder mute,
Pale on the earth the prostrate warrior lay;
But, when restor'd on those blest tones he dwelt,
The gracious accents of that spirit pure,
If erst he wish'd, now fervently he prayed
To see the close of that eventful war.
Nor swell'd his breast with conscious pride elate,
That Heaven to him the awful charge had given
But still as clearer shone the sovereign will,
More ardent and more pure his own aspires,
As the spark lightens mid the kindling flame.

Forthwith these mighty chiefs not distant far,
To council sage from each proud tent he calls,

Charge after charge he sent, entreatance fair
With mild advice uniting and with praise;
The brave but supine thus inciting still
To deeds of matchless valour, and their minds
Allúring to sustain, well pleas'd, the war.
Each leader, soldier, all, save Bœmond, came
And pitch'd their tents; some in the fields encamp'd,
And some in her proud walls Tortosa held:
At length, when all of worth and name had met,
A congress full and awful in its power,
Godfredo rising, drew attention hush'd
As midnight deep, or summer's noontide air;
Then, after graceful pause, the silence broke,
And stretch'd the arm sublime in act to speak.*

Warriors, by Heaven elected to restore
To mournful Sion the true faith of Christ,
By his sole care from perils great preserv'd,

* For this Miltonic paraphrase perhaps some apology may be deemed necessary, as I have converted the two lines of the original, the

> Qui il pio Goffredo in cominciò tra loro
> Augusto in volto, ed in sermon sonoro,—

into four; but the imagery appeared so appropriate and picturesque, that I could not avoid yielding to the temptation.

On many a rude and many an unknown shore
And many an ocean wave: ye who have brought
To his pure worship late rebellious realms,
And in their subject cities raised the cross,
The symbol of your vict'ries and his name! —
Yet not for this alone our homes we left,
Our native soil deserted; trust me, not
For this; nor credited the faithless sea,
Nor sought the dangers of a distant war,
To gain the idle bruit of vulgar fame,
The mere possession of a barb'rous land.
That for our labours were too mean a boon,
For that to shed our blood, and perish there.
No, this the scope was of our cherish'd hopes,
To scale of Sion's fort the sacred towers,
And free our brethren from the iron yoke
Of slavery and of shame. For this we came,
To found in Palestine a hallow'd throne,
A seat secure of piety and peace,
Where oft the grey-hair'd pilgrim might resort
To pay his vows, and bless his Saviour's tomb.

What hath been hitherto so well achiev'd,
So full of venture great and peril hard,
Shall it avail us aught, if now unnerv'd,
Supine and careless, we desert our cause?
What boots it to have pour'd o'er Syrian shores

The strength of Europe and her chivalry,
If now forgetful of our pledge to heaven,
We sit contented down, satiate with spoil,
With idle warfare, and with ravag'd realms?
It is not meet that *we* should empire build
On bases such as these, where, save ourselves,
Few bear the cross of Christ, and where, alas!
Nerveless and faithless, Greece an idler sits,
And western Europe lies remote and far.
Thus to proceed, what is it but to frame
Our own sepulchre in the lonely waste,
A tale of horror for the ear of time! *

True, we have foil'd the Persian and the Turk,
And hurl'd the pride of Antioch in the dust,
Deeds these of high emprise, and full of glory;
Yet are they but as gifts vouchsaf'd from heav'n,
As preludes to the act for which we came;
And should we falter from the path prescrib'd
By the just will and mighty arm of God,
That instant we become a powerless host,
A taunt and proverb for the nations round.

---

* This line may, I trust, be considered as a pardonable expansion of the preceding one. I give the Italian.

Ma ben move ruine, ond' egli oppresso
Sol costrutto un sepolcro abbia a se stesso.

I do adjure ye, therefore, not to throw
These gracious gifts away, not to prophane
Blessings by Heaven's peculiar favour sent,
But see the issue correspondent prove
To these the firstlings of our deeds of war.
Lo! breathing fragrance, Spring each zephyr calls,
Wakes the green earth, and smooths our path to fame;
Haste then to Sion, let our squadrons wheel
Their strength and splendour round her sacred walls.
Yes, my compeers, and faithful friends in arms,
The hour of conquest, witness heav'n and earth,
All times, and ages, future, present, past!
And you, ye blessed, on your thrones above!
The hour, the hour of final conquest dawns!

Rise then, my warriors, lest delay o'ercast
Our hopes of glory with a shade of doubt,
Ere Egypt, eager to arrest our course,
Shield yon proud pagans from the stroke of fate.

No. XV.

Il cantar, che nell' anima si sente!

The song which sinks and melts into the soul!

Of that species of minor poetry whose object is to commemorate the events and feelings of private life, no country has presented us with specimens so numerous and so beautiful as ancient Greece. In that collection which has descended to our times under the title of the Greek Anthology, nearly every affection of the heart, and every incident of domestic intercourse, have been recorded in strains of never-dying sweetness and simplicity.

Among these exquisite treasures, these χειμηλια of antiquity, none are so truly interesting as those which speak the language of tenderness and sorrow, as those that lament the privations and vicissitudes of man's feeble race,

or breathe the moral spirit of a soft and chastened melancholy. Elegant and seductive as are the offerings to youth and beauty, to the raptures of voluptuousness and revelry, we soon turn sated from these loud notes of joy, to listen with enduring fondness to the lyre that is consecrated to the quiet virtues of retired life, or in sweet and pensive tones pours its delicious balm over the couch of sickness and of sorrow, over the wounds of blighted love, and broken friendship.

To transfer the spirit of poetry such as this, whose very essence consists in simplicity of sentiment, in concinnity of language, and grace of expression, to the utter exclusion of every thing which approaches to what is forced or affected either in word or thought, demands an age far advanced in civilisation, an age of refinement and taste, and few, therefore, until within the last half-century, have been the happy cultivators of this branch of poetry.

The gaiety and volatility of our continental neighbours led them, previous to their tremendous revolution, to cultivate the lighter species of the Greek Epigram; and among

their *madrigals* and *Vers de Societé*, may be found many very successful imitations of the inscriptive writing of the Greeks, as distinguished from the pointed style and laboured wit of succeeding ages. But these are almost exclusively devoted to those portions of the Anthology, which are best designated by the epithets, gay, voluptuous, humourous, and convivial; and it has been left to this country to undertake the not less difficult, and, perhaps, equally congenial task of attempting to rival those more valuable parts which may be classed under the heads of descriptive and pathetic, moral and domestic.

With the exception, however, of a few of the numerous madrigals which were written during the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, and the inscriptions of Akenside, who was deeply imbued with the spirit of Grecian literature, it is only since the introduction of the *modern* sonnet, now about fifty years back, that we can boast of possessing numerous small pieces which, in unity, simplicity, and purity of thought and expression, are built upon the model of the Grecian Epigrammatists.

The cultivation of the sonnet for higher purposes than mere amatory complaint; as the medium of conveying the finest lessons of moral pathos, and some of the loveliest pictures of domestic virtue, insensibly led to the study and admiration of those ancient bards who first, in point of subject, trod this delightful path to fame; a taste which has been greatly accelerated, and widely diffused by the labours of Cumberland, Bland, and a few other congenial spirits.

The result has been, that since the commencement of the present century, there have appeared amongst us, several poetical anthologies which, not confined to the peculiar structure of the sonnet, have, in measures varied as the subject, pourtrayed the sorrows and the pleasures, the vicissitudes and anxieties of private life; have eulogised the virtues of the living, or consecrated the memory of the dead; and, in doing this, have preserved all that grace and delicacy of feeling, all that terseness and integrity of composition which has thrown over so many of the Greek epigrams a fascination of imperishable power.

Among the collections of this kind which have very lately made their appearance, I particularly wish to distinguish one which, under the title of "Domestic Hours," was given to the public during the course of the last * year. This interesting miscellany is preceded in the volume of whose contents it occupies nearly one-half, by two "Lyrical Dramas," entitled "Rinaldo and Armida," and "Love's Trial." These, whether contemplated in a lyric or dramatic point of view, are possessed of no common merit, especially the latter, which, as breathing the same tender tone of moral and domestic feeling, with the subsequent minor pieces, I shall briefly notice, ere I pass on to the more immediate objects of this paper.

The fable of this elegant little drama, is built upon the simple circumstance of the af-

---

"Lyrical Dramas: with Domestic Hours, a Miscellany of Odes and Songs. By Cornelius Neale, late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge." London: printed by Bensley and Son, Bolt-court, Fleet-street; for Pinnock and Maunder, 267, Strand. 1819.

fection of a young man being put to the test by the sudden destruction of the beauty of his mistress; and it opens with the following exquisite song, which Ellen, the amiable object of attachment, sings to the harp as the composition of her lover.

There is a love that lasts a while,
A one-day's flower, — no more,
Opes in the sunshine of a smile,
And shuts when clouds come o'er.

There is a love that ever lasts,
A shrub that's always green;
It flowers amid the bitter blasts,
And decks a wintry scene.

A cheek, an eye, a well-turn'd foot
May give the first its birth,
The floweret has but little root,
And asks but little earth!

No scanty soil true love must find
Its vigour to control;
It roots itself upon the mind,
And strikes into the soul!

Of the delightful trains of imagery which pervade this production, and of the beauty and delicacy of the expression in which they are brought forward, an adequate idea may be formed from the lines I am about to quote, and which are not, like flowers in a desart, striking from the power of contrast, but rise up amid creations of a similar kind, as lovely in their colour, and as delicious in their perfume.

There's not a sense
But draws in healing here: amid these wilds
And woods and waters, all is health and beauty,
Beauty to the eye, and gladness to the heart.
How oft on yonder height the traveller pauses
To gaze awhile down the sweet lake, whose isles,
Tufted with coppice-wood, lie thick below
Irregularly scattered. Still beyond,
The water gleams, and still the banks run out
In pointed cape and promontory small.
The eye shoots forward, till the boundary hills
Grow lower, and the colouring dies away,
And mingles in the distance, faint and skiey.
It seems an entrance into Paradise,
And all beyond is fancy's; and as there,
In the cool even-tide, so soft and still,

Some little boat will glide its easy way
Midst the reflections of the sunset, sure
It seems a convoy of departed souls,
And that their heaven of bliss.

(ELLEN's *harp heard within.*

Edward. Hark! 'tis her harp.

ELLEN, (*within.*)

SONG.

The sun he hath sunk to rest;
But his light is still in the cloud of the west,
And it lingers and lingers there,
Oh sweeter far to the lover's eye
Than the beautiful blue of the summer sky,
With its broadest noon-tide glare.
So pleasures they die away;
Yet a lively glow of them oft will stay
In the memory, lingering yet,
More touchingly sweet, oh, beyond compare,
Than the short and flower-like pleasures were,
The pleasures that we regret.

It is, however, in the pieces entitled "Domestic Hours, a Miscellany of Odes and Songs," that we are to look for a more intimate transcript of the author's mind. With the excep-

tion, indeed, of some translations from the *Carmina* of Horace, they are evidently the offspring of actual occurrences, and have originated from the real and unexaggerated feelings of domestic happiness, and family incident. I may venture in fact, to assert, from authority of the most unexceptionable kind, that, amiable and lovely as is the picture which these poems reflect to us, it has been drawn by one, who, utterly void of all affectation of sensibility, had but to dip the pencil in his own heart.

Of that deep and full relish for the peace and blessedness of home, without which neither the filial, fraternal, conjugal, nor paternal virtues can exist, we have many strong and highly interesting instances in this beautiful anthology, more especially in the poem whence I have taken an extract in the first number of this work, and to which, in order to do justice to the subject, I shall now recur. It is entitled "The Winter Evening," and sketches a fireside family-group with all the zest and enthusiasm of Cowper.

> The vernal morn let others praise, —
> I love this hour of doubtful gloom,

This social twilight, where the blaze,
As on each face by turns it plays,
And shifting still, and still, lets fall
Fantastic shadows on the wall,
Shows nought but innocence, and mirth,
And love, around our happy hearth.

More fuel! — frost is in the air,
I feel its nipping influence here;
And close the shutters too, — the snow
Looks cheerless on the fields below,
And cheerlessly the leafless trees
Toss their dark branches in the breeze. —

O happy, on a night like this,
The man who knows domestic bliss;
Good humour there, and gay good-will,
And each still pleas'd in pleasing still,
And dimpled cheek and swimming eye
That speak of soft and sober joy.
Here, the sweet child, with honest glee,
Just labours up his father's knee,
And peering archly in his face,
Tempts him to infant playfulness:
There, in the darkest nook, apart
The stripling sits of tender heart,
Presses the hand he loves, and swears,
In whisper soft, to partial ears.

A family picture of equal truth and beauty, and, perhaps, even more attractive from an air of pensiveness, which absence from the circle it delineates has almost unconsciously thrown over it, has been given to us in a poem, under the title of "The Reverie," written from College on the birth-day of the author's mother. As not a line of this engaging little production can be omitted, without detriment to the general effect, I shall present it to my readers entire.

No lights; they break the spell; — away!
Let Fancy have her wildest play,
And, by the wood-fire's cheery gleam,
Sit musing on her favourite theme,
The dear domestic group, that meet,
This happy day once more to greet,
With heart-felt warmth, and honest glee
And infantine festivity.

Oh, as yon mirror's polish'd frame
Catches by fits the dying flame,
And indistinctly shows the room
Half-shrouded in a glimmering gloom:
Oh, could some wizard wave his wand,
And show me there the happy band!

— 'Tis done: like summer-clouds that pass,
At noontide, o'er the sunny grass,
From the dark mirror flits away
The scene, in broken dis-array,
And lo! to Fancy's charmed eyes
The gay illusion seems to rise.
I see thee, dearest mother, there,
In thine old-fashioned elbow-chair,
Thy knitting for a while laid by,
To watch the children's revelry.
And her, I see her, by thy side,
Who marks them with a mother's pride,
Shares all their griefs, and all their joys,
And lives but in her favourite boys.
They now on pictured story pore,
Still pleased, so often pleased before,
Now lisp, (their accents meet my ear,)
The infant hymn thou lovest to hear
And now they join in frolic play,
And all are noisy, all are gay,
And health and innocency speak
In every plump and rosy cheek.
Ah me! what buoyant spirits there!
No thought, no sorrow, and no care;
That Age might for a while throw by
Its wrinkles, and its gravity,

And even Philosophy might stoop,
To mingle with the frolic group.
And now — 'tis silence all and gloom,
And my own solitary room.

There is something inexpressibly soothing and delightful in these domestic sketches; and the more so, as the general outline which they afford is filled up, in various other parts of the collection by delineations of a still more distinct and individualised character. What, for instance, can surpass the sweet and affectionate tenderness of the following lines which Mr. Neale has addressed to his lady during a period of severe suffering from long-continued indisposition. The second and third stanzas of the extract are alike interesting from the endearing tone of the sentiment, and the felicitous appropriation of the imagery.

I said, I would love thee in want or in wealth,
Thro' cloud and thro' sunshine, in sickness, in health:
And fear not, my love, when thy spirits are weak,
The troth I have plighted I never may break. —

Aye, sickness; but sickness it touches the heart
With a feeling, where how many feelings have part!
There's a magic in soothing the wearisome hour,
Pity rears up the stem, and Hope looks for the flower.

The rose smells as sweetly in sunshine and air,
But the greenhouse has all our affection and care:
The lark sings as nobly, while soaring above,
But the bird that we nurse is the bird that we love.

I have loved thee in sickness; I'll love thee in health;
And if want be our portion, why love be our wealth:
Thy comfort in sorrow, thy stay when most weak,
The troth I have pligh 'd I never will break.

But of all the affections and affinities of domestic life to which this volume is consecrated, there is no one which impresses us with such a high idea of the purity and sanctity of the author's heart, as the holy and reverential love which he every where expresses for his aged mother, and more than once for the memory of his departed brother. Of these exquisite effusions of filial and fraternal piety, I shall

select two, hich I think it impossible to read without intimately feeling them to be the genuine and unaffected offspring of some of the noblest and finest emotions of the human breast; without being conscious too that the poet has done ample justice to the hallowed nature of his theme.

In the first of these, entitled "The Valley of St. John," and addressed to his Mother on her Birth-day, the poet, after noticing the singularly illusive appearance of a Gothic fortress which so remarkably distinguishes that sequestered dell, and which vanishes as you attempt to approach it, has thus rendered the deception the happy medium for a noble and consolatory lesson of wisdom and morality.

'Tis gone,' I said, 'the fabric fair
Hath proved — a castle in the air,'
And thus, I thought, when life is young,
And spirit high, and feeling strong,
Seems all beneath the distant sky
A world of happiness to lie,
And all that poets dream is there,
And all that's kind, and good, and fair:

And on we press with eager haste,
To see, and hear, and touch, and taste,
And grey experience tells in vain,
How much of mortal life is pain.
Thus far thy son: but well I ween
That whoso seventy years hath seen,
Hath witness'd oft the gallant dream
Melt in the morning's sober beam;
Hath pluck'd the fruit of goodliest rind,
Ashes and bitterness to grind;
Hath cropp'd the flower so fair he found,
To strew its leaflets on the ground:
And, disappointed at each turn,
Hath said, that man was made to mourn,
In bitterness of heart hath said,
'Twere better to be with the dead.
Then happy he, whose prospect lies
Above the earth, beyond the skies;
And happy thou, my mother dear,
Whose treasure hath so long been there.
No shadows those, the eye to cheat,
No disappointment, no deceit.
A little while, and thou shalt be
Among that blessed company.
Who past, like thee, from youth to age,
As on a holy pilgrimage,

And now have reach'd the wished shrine,
The heavenly height, the throne divine.
A little while, and thou shalt see
Him whom we wept so tenderly;
Shall see him — what an alter'd sight!
That corpse — how beautiful! how bright!
And oh! how sweet with him to raise
The song of everlasting praise.

Yet mournfully sweet, and tenderly pious as are these lovely lines, they are, beyond all doubt, surpassed as well in originality as in solemnity and pathos, by the immediately succeeding stanzas to his mother in commemoration of the same day, but written "after the death of a brother." Highly as I have estimated the poetical powers and moral feeling which pervade these "Domestic Hours," I am much mistaken if the affecting imagery and sublime sentiment of this very superior production, will not more than substantiate whatever may have been here said concerning the taste, the sensibility, and the genius of Mr. Neale.

Oh, weep not for him, 'tis unkindness to weep;
The weary weak "frame" hath but fallen asleep;

No more of fatigue or endurance it knows; —
Oh, weep not, oh, break not the gentle repose.

He sleeps, — oh, how kindly, on Jesus's breast!
Never more the sick dreamings shall trouble his rest;
And her lips, that would healing and comfort restore,
Shall burn his cold lips and cold cheeks never more.

Weep not that so soon he is gone to be blest;
He gave to his God the first hours and the best,
Can the labourer cease from his labour too soon?
He wrought all the morning, and rested at noon.

Short, short was the circuit his sun journey'd through,
But the air was unruffled, the heaven was blue;
And the clouds, the thick clouds, that hung round him at night,
Only caught, and more richly reflected his light.

We gather the flower when full in its bloom,
While brightest in colour and best in perfume;
And the victim was given to God in old time,
Without spot, without blemish, a male in his prime.

Then weep not.—Ah me, as I say it, I weep;
The wound is too cutting, the sorrow too deep:
Weep on, it is nature will have it, weep on;
We speak of his graces;—those graces are gone.

Dear mother! I turn to each birth-day of thine,
What sorrowful chances have mark'd thy decline!
The winds blow sad music, the yellow leaves fall,
And winter comes gloomily, wrapt in a pall.

Yet murmur not, murmur not; His the decree,
Who is better, far better, than ten sons to thee:
Though writhing and smarting, yet welcome the rod,
Though in doubt and in darkness, oh, lean on thy God.

The pieces which we have hitherto selected, from this interesting Anthology, have been, with one exception, on subjects of a serious cast; it may be necessary, therefore, to state that there are several in the collection of a lighter and more buoyant nature; yet, as it seems a feature in the character of real genius to render every topic, however trivial, in some degree subservient to higher views, even these will be found to possess just such a por-

tion of pensive or moral thought as may arrest their evanescency, and enable them to sink into the heart. The imagery, for example, of the last two stanzas of the following passage from the poem accompanying a "cluster of December roses," has given to a subject of slight moment a power of impression, an interest with the sympathies and finer feelings of our nature which can never fade.

I gather'd these roses, my love, in July,
When the roses were thick on the trees,
As sweet to the scent, and as soft to the eye,
But, oh, not so lovely as these.

For they were but one in a crowd of delights,
The children of sunshine and dew,
When the days were all blessed, all blessed the nights,
And the sky an unchangeable blue.

But these, when December is dark over head,
And the garden all leafless around,
We cherish these buds as a voice from the dead,
As a well in the summer-scorch'd ground;

As the prisoner would cherish the stragglings of light,
That found their way into his cell,

Telling yet of a world that is blithesome and bright,
A world where the happy ones dwell.

Few as are the specimens which I have now produced from this miscellany, they will be sufficient, I am persuaded, to give an accurate idea of its general tone and character. It is, indeed, more than any other collection I have ever seen, a picture of the heart of the individual; yet, though he be himself, in a great measure, the subject of his own book, as he confesses by the motto to his "Domestic Hours," *Je suis moy même la matiere de mon livre;* yet, so powerful is the appeal, through the medium of his own feelings to those of general humanity, so efficiently has he built his trust on our common nature, so heartily and entirely do we enter into, and feel a communion with, the most secret movements of his soul, that he never once chills the current of emotion, or interrupts the stream of gratification in his readers, by any ostentation of egotism, or any suspicion of insincerity.

There is, indeed, so much of simplicity, of truth and fervor in his language, so much about

him of the free and unrestrained impulse of a guileless and confiding mind, that whether he sit by the couch of sleeping infancy or reposing age, whether he paint the calm pleasures of domestic life, or watch with smothered anguish the encroachment of disease, as it steals with insidious ravage over the cheek of her whom best he loves, we are alike conscious of that intellectual charm which impresses on the accents of his joy or grief a remembrance that shall last for ever.

No. XVI.

Ἀμφιχυθεὶς πατέρ᾽ ἐσθλὸν ὀδύρετο, δακρυα λείβων,
Ἀμφοτέροισι δὲ τοισιν ὑφ᾽ ἵμερος ὦρτο γόοιο·

HOMERI *Od.* Π'. 214.

——————————— He threw
His arms around his father's neck, and wept.
Pangs of soft sorrow not to be suppress'd
Seized both.

COWPER.

SOME minutes had passed after the abrupt departure of Haselford, before Colonel Burton recovered sufficient recollection to advert to the situation of his daughter, whom he had necessarily left under much trepidation and alarm. He hastened, therefore, as soon as the shock arising from the late communication had somewhat subsided, to relieve her fears and met her descending into the hall. She had in vain endeavoured to procure intelligence from the

servants, whose terrors were such, that, having once collected together, they were absolutely afraid to separate, and it was not without much trouble and persuasion that they could be induced to return to their respective chambers. The subject which had engrossed their attention, now occupied that of their superiors, and the chapel clock had struck three, ere the Colonel and his daughter exhausted by fruitless speculations on the events of the night, and on the remarkable coincidence which had occurred between them, could banish their anxieties in the arms of sleep.

Emily, however, notwithstanding her recent agitation, had not so far forgotten her engagement with Jane Bellerdiston, but that she rose sufficiently early to fulfil her promise. Yet she first stepped into her father's room, solicitous to know if he, as well as herself, had felt the comforts of repose. She found him still slumbering, but apparently heated and unrefreshed, and occasionally starting, as if perturbed by uneasy dreams. An habitual reliance on the protection of Heaven had been from early childhood the chief blessing of Emily's life, and she now knelt

down by her father's side to implore for him that peace of mind, that calmness and tranquillity of spirit, without which all earthly enjoyment is as nothing. The prayer was not unheard; an expression of sweetness and composure, gradually stole upon his features; the tumult of the mind seemed hushed, and as she hung over him with affectionate solicitude, a smile playing upon his lips gave her full assurance of that change of thought for which she had so earnestly petitioned. It was with a lightened heart, therefore, that, after witnessing this pleasing alteration, she resumed her original purpose, and, tripping softly through the gallery, hastened to meet her new friend.

To those who have suffered from visionary terrors of the night; from apprehensions connected with a belief in super-human agency, the realities of existence, the return of light, the breath of morning, the open azure of the sky, the green bosom of the earth, possess a power soothing as to him who from the bed of sickness first inhales the renovating atmosphere of heaven. With such delight, with such a happy and benign influence, did Emily now

feel the living freshness of the air; nature seemed spread before her in all the prodigality of beauty, and while sentiments glowing with gratitude escaped in broken accents from her lips, she felt, intensely felt, how merciful were the dispensations of Providence in educing pleasure from vicissitude, from the very inmost recesses, as it were, of previous pain.

The little circular lawn, hallowed by its tribute from filial piety, was now in view, and Jane, who had been some time there, and listening for her promised companion, started from its interior to meet her. The interview on such a spot almost necessarily led to recollections of a similar kind on the part of both ladies; and after some natural tears devoted to the memories of their respective parents, the interests of the moment recurred, and Jane eagerly enquired after the purport of Colonel Haselford's visit to the Priory, remarking at the same time with expressions of anxiety and regret, the pallor and fatigue which were but too evidently visible on the features of her friend. Emily answered that the only important particular which had yet dropped from her father

relative to his conference with Colonel Haselford, was that the latter had brought intelligence of the indisposition and approaching dissolution of Cromwell, an event which she hoped would bring with it a return of prosperity to the house of Bellerdiston." It is, indeed, a most welcome piece of information," said Jane; "for that bold and bad man has been a bitter scourge to every loyal heart; but surely the prospect of such an occurrence cannot have driven the roses from Miss Burton's cheeks!" — "Ah, no," replied Emily, "in that respect I feel as you do; circumstances of a very different kind have wrought the change you notice." She then related how much her father had been shocked by the discovery in the secret chamber, and how greatly she had suffered, both on his account, and from the equally mysterious alarm which had preceded the departure of Colonel Haselford.

"How much pleasure does it give me, my dear Miss Burton," exclaimed Jane, "that I am able to explain away all your apprehensions on these points; and would it had been in my power to have prevented the uneasiness which

you have endured! But, even had an opportunity for communication been allowed me, I know not that the supposition of your father's discovery, from the great improbability of its occurrence, would have entered my mind; and of the subsequent source of alarm I was unapprised until too late for the possibility of any intercourse between us. But, not to detain you any longer from the solution of these difficulties; — the figure which the Colonel beheld is merely a copy in composition from the celebrated bust of Bernini, with a slight alteration in the position of the features, and with the residue of the form superadded from faithful memory. My father was enthusiastically attached to the unfortunate Charles, and while the anguish arising from his deplorable catastrophe was still recent in his mind, he felt it to be a consolation of inexpressible value, to offer up his petitions beside the kneeling figure of his once pious sovereign. The custom, however, was not continued long; for beside some sense of its impropriety, he was apprehensive that such a marked devotion to the memory of the injured monarch, might reach the ears of

government, and bring on the resentment of Cromwell, and the ruin of those who were most dear to him. The room, therefore, containing this singular proof of loyalty, was at length closed up by a neatly fitted pannel, and to obliterate, as much as possible, all vestiges of its former existence, a large family picture, corresponding in size with one on the other side of the mantle-piece, was hung before it. There can be no doubt that the removal of these pictures by Mr. Melville, at our particular request, led to the detection; for the pannel had probably shrank, and when its wonted covering was withdrawn, admitted that current of air whose sound first attracted Colonel Burton's attention. Such is the simple developement of this apparently super-human occurrence; nor does any thing more mysterious hang over the event which drove Colonel Haselford from the Priory; it was merely the contrivance of my brother, whose hatred of this republican chief, led him to assume the visionary appearance which so powerfully awakened the fears of the conscience-stricken regicide. The features of Edward are thought to bear a strong resemblance

to those of the martyred Charles; and this, together with an easy though secret access to the Abbot's chamber, first suggested the means of carrying his wishes into execution. That the terror arising from this illusion, and which was intended solely for the breast of Haselford, should have spread to others, will, I know, be to him a subject of great regret."

"You have, indeed, my dearest Jane," cried Emily, "relieved both my father's mind and my own from a load of anxiety, and I hasten to communicate to him the result of an interview which has proved, in every respect, so completely satisfactory. Yet I must enquire, ere I go, if the expected death of the Protector will not enable us to be together, in future, without this irksome parade of caution and secresy? Surely this will be the case; and let me add, what I forgot to mention when we last met, that I have taken a peculiar pleasure in nursing your plants and flowers, and in preserving the elegance of that suite of apartments with which they are so tastefully connected, and where I trust and hope, we may soon daily

enjoy each other's society without fear or interruption."

"And so you have already found out," said Miss Bellerdiston, "my favourite charge, my little study, and all its matchless arrangements! Upon my word," she continued, taking Emily affectionately by the hand, "I must declare the Colonel and yourself to be two of the most diligent and successful hunters after hidden things that I have ever heard of; but, seriously speaking, I feel myself," she added, smiling through her tears, "highly gratified by, and truly grateful for, your kind attentions; and should the event we look forward to, introduce a change favourable to the friends of the constitutional monarchy, I need not say how happy I shall be in revisiting, with such a companion my beloved flowers, and once more enjoying the blessings of society under that dear paternal roof! At present, however, we cannot be too much on our guard, — but, I see your impatience, — fly, my dear Emily, to your father, and may you succeed in alleviating the agitations of his mind; — farewell!"

That the intelligence which Emily had to

convey, should communicate an immediate and soothing effect to the perturbed imagination of Colonel Burton, might rationally be conjectured. It had, indeed, a full and permanent influence over the residue of his days, by proving to him, that so morbid was the state of excitement to which he had subjected his mind, that causes trivial in themselves and admitting of an easy explanation, had power to endanger the very foundations of his reason and perception. The beneficial result too was greatly accelerated by the arrival, in a few days, of a piece of intelligence for which he had been in some measure prepared, — the death of the once mighty Protector, who had expired, after an indisposition of but a few weeks, on the afternoon of the 3d of September.

Not many days had passed subsequent to this important event, when Colonel Burton was agreeably surprised by a visit from Mr. Melville. "He had called," he observed; "not only to congratulate the Colonel on the public news, but to say, that as the government had now fallen into the hands of a man of mild and benevolent character, he thought no danger

could accrue to Sir Gregory Bellerdiston, if he ventured cautiously to re-appear among a few of those on whom he could best depend. With this view," he added, "I am of opinion I cannot do better than seize the present opportunity for redeeming the pledge which I gave you, Colonel, for the earliest introduction in my power to the former proprietor of this mansion. If it meet your approval, therefore, I shall be most gratified in introducing you and Miss Burton, this very morning, to Sir Gregory and his family, who have already left their former place of concealment for the house of a friend in the neighbourhood."

"I shall accompany you, Mr. Melville," replied the Colonel, "with great pleasure; and Emily will, I have no doubt, most readily join the expedition. But why did not Sir Gregory, who might be said to have been living almost beneath his own roof, make himself known to me here?"— "Place yourself but for a moment, Colonel Burton," answered Mr. Melville, "in Sir Gregory's situation, and you will instantly acknowledge those feelings of delicacy and propriety which have been the guiding motives

both with him and his family in forming this arrangement." — "I can well conceive them, sir," cried the Colonel, after a short pause; "but whither," he added, "is the worthy Baronet gone, to whose fidelity and attachment has he flown for refuge?"

"He is under the protection," answered Mr. Melville, "of a gentleman who has been resident in this part of the country about five years; a firm yet temperate royalist, but who, having borne arms in defence of his late sovereign, was compelled, shortly after the unfortunate issue of the contest, to quit the kingdom, until the ardor of enquiry subsiding, he ventured, under the assumed name of Simonberg, to return, fixing on a situation as far as possible removed from the former place of his abode. It was not long, however, before Sir Gregory, who had known and admired him during the period of the Rebellion, found out his retreat, and similarity of sentiment soon established a communication between them, which, though covertly carried on, and at the distance of ten miles from each other, has been ever since of the most frequent and intimate kind. To the roof

of this worthy man was Sir Gregory invited, when the edict of proscription was issued out against him; but, unwilling to endanger the safety of his friend, and anxious at the same time to carry his own plan into effect, he chose rather to submit to the many privations attendant on its execution, than attempt the preservation of existence by means so hazardous to the life of others."

"And pray, sir," said Colonel Burton, eagerly interrupting the chaplain, "may I be allowed to enquire the real name of this generous soldier; for, implicated as I have been in all the transactions of the late war, it is more than probable, that, notwithstanding he was of the adverse party, I may be well acquainted with his character, and even with his person; and as to any risk arising from the communication, I trust you are sufficiently acquainted with my views and principles, Mr. Melville, to be altogether at your ease on that account."

"I am perfectly ready and willing, Colonel Burton, to comply with your request, and I have, therefore, merely to add, that the title by

which this gentleman has been formerly known to his friends, was that of *Sir Philip Waldgrave.*" "Good God!" exclaimed the Colonel, covering his face with his hands, and staggering into a chair, "it is my wife's brother!"

"Of the identity which has thus astonished you, sir," observed Mr. Melville, "I was apprised yesterday; for in calling upon Sir Philip to acquaint him with his friend's wish to meet you under his roof, I found that, though informed of the arrival of the new possessor of Kirton priory, he was yet ignorant of his name, and you may conceive, from your present feelings, what must have been his surprise when I pronounced the name of Colonel Burton. Great, however, as was his amazement at this piece of intelligence, it was soon lost in the pleasure which he derived from learning the change which had taken place in your political principles; nor could I witness without emotion, the tears of joy that trembled in his eyes, when I told him of your intention with regard to Sir Gregory."

"My dear sir," cried the Colonel, starting from his seat, "how much am I indebted to you

for this kind interposition! Let us not lose a moment; for I long once more to press the noble veteran to my heart, to show him his beloved Emily, the darling of his earlier years, the very image of her lamented mother; a sight, which, were it wanting for such a purpose, would instantly banish from his mind all recollection of our party feuds. And with what rapture will my dear girl again behold her venerated uncle! It does, indeed, strike me with astonishment, Mr. Melville, when I look back upon the circumstances of my past life, that with all my nearest relatives attached not only to a monarchical form of government, but even to the person of their king, I alone should have run counter to their wishes, and become, as I certainly was at one time, an enthusiastic republican! Bitter experience, however, has but too forcibly taught me, how erroneous was the estimate I had formed of the characters and designs of my associates, with whom ignorance, fanaticism, and ambition were, if not exclusively, at least very frequently, the only incentive to change; and I have long awakened a repentant, though I confess, a disappointed man, to the

sober conviction, that our liberty, to be rational and durable, can alone be secured on the basis of our original constitution. But this is not a time for political confession; — let me hasten to communicate your welcome intelligence to my daughter."

Scarcely, however, had he uttered these words when Miss Burton entered the room, whose surprise, as well as pleasure, upon learning the subject of Mr. Melville's mission, may be easily conceived, more especially as it included the prospect of a cordial reconciliation between two individuals, who, though endeared to her by every tie of nature and affection, had been so long estranged from each other. She felt and expressed the utmost impatience to be gone; and no sooner did the horses and servants appear, than, mounting her favourite roan, she cantered off between her father and Mr. Melville, who had come prepared to escort them, with a lightness and gaiety of spirit that irresistibly communicated itself to all around.

The cottage of Sir Philip Waldgrave, for so we shall now term him, was, for obvious reasons, placed in as retired a situation as possible; it

was distant from any public road, accessible only by one narrow and intricate path, and almost hidden, as it were, in the depth of an unfrequented glen. The rapid pace, therefore, in which our travellers commenced their journey, was soon arrested by the necessity of a strict attention to themselves and their horses; and it was only where they occasionally came on open ground or moorland, that they found themselves sufficiently disengaged for the purposes of conversation. The subject was then naturally that which had given risen to their expedition, and Colonel Burton, after expatiating for some time on the double gratification he was about to receive, and probably to confer, inquired into the mode of life which Sir Philip, under the assumed character of Mr. Simonberg, had thought proper to adopt. "His habits," Mr. Melville answered, "were, he believed, rather from necessity than from choice, very retired, and that he had been on terms of intimacy with no family in the neighbourhood, except the Bellerdistons, and, even at the Priory, his visits had been paid by stealth. He was generally considered, he said, by the country people, as a

foreigner, an idea which he loved to encourage, and which he supported, indeed, with much dexterity. He was by no means, however, in perfect solitude; for there resided with him a young gentleman of the name of Fitzaubert, a youth of pleasing person and most amiable manners, and between whom and Jane Bellerdiston there existed, he had reason to think, a mutual attachment.

It was shortly after the communication of this piece of intelligence, which seemed greatly to interest both Colonel Burton and his daughter, that, on abruptly turning the extremity of a narrow pass, the cottage of Sir Philip came in sight. It was placed at the foot of a steep declivity, and partly overshadowed by a group of firs and mountain-ashes, whilst from the riven cliffs on each side, as you approached it, was heard the murmuring of many a waterfall, that, when swelled by winter or autumnal rains, could deafen the neighbourhood with its roar. These now gave rather a scanty tribute to the stream which, washing the base of the declivity in front, hurried through the bottom of the glen. It was, in fact, a scene singularly wild

and solitary, and as our travellers picked their way among the masses of rock which had fallen from the precipices above, and were scattered in every direction over the strip of ground that lay between their rugged sides and the channel of the torrent, they almost fancied themselves journeying through some of the inmost recesses of Borrowdale or Seathwaite.

The slope or knoll, however, on which this secluded residence seemed dropped as if by enchantment, was of the most vivid green, exhibiting a fine contrast to the grey and fractured sides of the rock, which formed a lofty screen on either hand. A rude bridge constructed of the trunks of trees, and which was annually swept away and replaced, admitted the party to the verge of the ascent, where a servant stood ready to receive their horses, and they proceeded on foot to join Edward and Jane Bellerdiston who, having long watched their approach as they slowly advanced up the glen, now came forward with rapture sparkling in their eyes, to welcome their young friend. These Mr. Melville immediately introduced to

the Colonel, who, prepossessed in their favour, and struck by their appearance, met them with the utmost cordiality, and they entered the cottage together.

Colonel Burton and his daughter were shown into a separate room, where, in a few minutes, the door opening, presented to them their long-lost friend and relation. Mutually prepared for the interview, all traces of former animosity had vanished from their minds, and recollecting nothing but the dear image of her who had once bound them together, Sir Philip and the Colonel instantly and silently embraced. The next moment placed Emily in the arms of her uncle; and while tears of joy bedewed his manly cheeks, he clasped her fervently to his bosom, invoking blessings on her head.

As soon, however, as the agitations of feeling had somewhat subsided, Sir Philip, adverting to the original object of the visit, proposed the admission of his venerable friend. Let us not defer it, my dear sir, a moment longer, exclaimed the Colonel, and, accordingly, Sir Philip, retiring into an adjacent room, soon reappeared with Sir Gregory Bellerdiston leaning

upon his arm, and followed by his two children.

The person and the features of Sir Gregory were calculated, even on the first sight, to make a strong and pleasing impression. He was nearly seventy, having married late in life, and time had given to his once dark hair somewhat of the sober grey of years; but his figure, though tall, was still erect and firm, his eyes yet sparkled with the feeling and the fire of earlier days, and the ruddy hue of vigorous health still lingered on his cheek. His was, in fact, a green old age, the result of a happy combination of moral and physical causes, of exercise and temperance, united with that singleness of heart, that peace and sunshine of the mind, which for ever playing on the current of existence, gives to the utmost portion of its course, the charm of interest and loveliness. Hence it was, that benevolence and kindness were so plainly pictured on the countenance of Sir Gregory, that sorrow and misfortune instinctively took shelter under his protection; nor, often as the appeal was made, did they ever turn uncheered from the gates of Kirton Priory.

"Little did I expect, Colonel Burton," said the worthy Baronet as he entered the room, "ever to have experienced such liberal and munificent conduct as I have found from you. Even had I previously known the generous and noble-minded disposition of my successor, I could not have conceived any thing of disinterestedness approaching to this. How then shall I find words to express —"

"My dearest sir," interrupted the Colonel, pressing the hands of the amiable old man, "say no more; I will solve the mystery in a very few words.—I am no longer a republican, at least no longer so on British ground. Deluded by the machinations of those who only sought, under the mask of liberty, to gratify their own bad passions, I have been betrayed into the support of measures of which I now see, not only the inutility, but the strong pernicious tendency. Hither, indeed, I came to lull the suspicions of the despot who had enchained me, but with a firm resolve to seize the first opportunity of making restitution, whatever might be the character of the individual whom I was condemned to supplant. When, therefore, I found myself

the instrument of ruin to an ancient and honourable house, the mean of expelling from his native halls, him who had been the love and veneration of the country round, the father of the poor and friendless, you may readily imagine with what anxiety I looked forward to a day of restitution. That it would have occurred so soon, that, in little more than three weeks after my arrival, I should have it in my power to tell Sir Gregory Bellerdiston, as I now with most unfeigned pleasure do, that I resign all claim to his property of whatever description, was scarcely, I confess, within my contemplation. But I am rejoiced that it has so happened, and I trust you will instantly return with me and take a formal re possession of the Priory."

"Most generous of friends," exclaimed the Baronet, struggling to suppress his emotions, "Heaven and not man must requite your integrity! Yet permit me to observe, that the transfer which you meditate cannot, either with safety to yourself or to me, be made public at present. It will be necessary, therefore, for a time at least, that you continue the ostensible

lord of Kirton Priory; and whenever the character of the government becomes such as to admit of my re-appearance without risk, I will gladly avail myself of your noble offer."

"I will readily acquiesce in this arrangement;" cried the Colonel, "provided you, Sir Gregory, and your family, take up your abode at the Priory. There, under the precautions which I will make it my duty to enforce, you may live as secure as when concealed among the ruins of the ancient Abbey, and with the important advantage, too, of having nearly all your former comforts around you. I trust, also, that my good friend here," pointing to Sir Philip Waldgrave, "will join the party: there is, as you well know, no want of room, and without any disparagement to this little villa of yours, Sir Philip, which, by the by, has rather too much for me of savage grandeur around it, I do really think that yourself as well as your guests will be benefited by the exchange."

"I could have no objection to shelter myself under your hospitable roof," replied Sir Philip, "had I not a young friend with me

to whom I have pledged my protection." "Place him under mine," exclaimed the Colonel, with unwonted animation, and I will answer for his safety with my life."—"I do believe you," said Sir Philip with a smile, "and I will, therefore, take the liberty of introducing him."—"He shall have a soldier's cordial welcome, sir," rejoined the Colonel, as Sir Philip quitted the room.

The conversation now took a lively turn among the junior members of the company, while Sir Gregory, Mr. Melville, and the Colonel, were engaged in consulting upon the best and least observant mode of their reassembling at the Priory, when the voice of Sir Philip uttering as he re-entered, "Mr. Fitzaubert, Colonel Burton," instantly drew their attention, and, in a moment, the exclamations of "My father! my dear father!"—"My son! my son!" issued from the lips of Fitzaubert and the Colonel, and they rushed into each other's arms? Astonishment, meanwhile, had fixed the residue of the party with the exception of Sir Philip Waldgrave, powerless to the spot,

till a deep sigh from Miss Burton, and an immediate movement on the part of Sir Philip, awoke them from their trance, and they beheld their young friend fainting in the arms of her uncle.

Disengaged from the embrace of the Colonel, Henry flew to the relief of his sister, and, on her recovery, a scene of inexpressible tenderness took place between them. They had been beyond the common measure of a brother's and a sister's love, dear to each other, and they had now unexpectedly met, after a disastrous separation of several years, and at a time when even the very existence of the young soldier was still a subject of doubt. "Oh, my dear brother!" she faintly cried, as the power of utterance returned, "with what rapture have I seen you once more folded to our father's bosom! Surely the blessed spirit of our mother is with us, rejoicing in this re-union, of our hearts!" — "Yes, my beloved sister," he replied, "doubtless she beholds this happy scene, and breathes the benediction of Heaven upon our heads! But see, my Emily, even our father weeps!"

The emotions, indeed, of the Colonel had been too strong for his powers of suppression; "These are tears, my children," he exclaimed, "of gratitude and joy. Never again shall faction separate the father from his son! I tremble but to think what might have been the issue of the contest; and I thank my God, that having escaped the horrors of personal opposition in the field, we have met, at length united in our views, to part, I trust, no more!"

It was at this moment, when the first conflict of nature had passed away, that the congratulations of sympathising friendship stepped in, and most heartily did Sir Gregory and Mr. Melville express their cordial gratification and delight in the discovery and re-union of which they had just been such interested witnesses. But it was with sensations still more intense, and widely different in their kind, that Edward and Jane Bellerdiston came forward to express their feelings on the occasion. To the Colonel, indeed, and Sir Philip, their felicitations were given in a style of due composure; but when they reached their friends Henry and Emily Burton, there was a tremor and agitation,

suffusion of colour and hesitation of manner, so observable both in them, and in those to whom they were now speaking, as to awaken not only a certain train of suspicion in the mind of Colonel Burton, but to call forth a smile from the residue of the party.

In fact, the *denouement* which had just taken place, had excited such a tumult of hope and expectation, of mingled rapture and surprise, in the breasts of these young people, as to deprive them, for a short space of time, of their usual powers of self-possession. The mystery which had so long hung over the origin and family of Henry Fitzaubert, and which Sir Philip Waldgrave, whilst under the character of Mr. Simonberg, had not thought it prudent to remove, had very naturally indisposed Sir Gregory Bellerdiston to any serious intimacy between that young man and his daughter; this mystery was now dispelled, and Jane Bellerdiston beheld in the person of her lover, the son of the generous and noble-minded friend of her father. Nor was the satisfaction of Emily less complete; for, independent of that joyful event, the restoration of her brother, she had

reason to think, that, from the connection between the two families which this discovery had unfolded, the partiality which Edward had already evinced for her might be cherished to maturity.

If so flattering had become the prospects of the ladies, we may easily imagine how ardent and assured were the hopes of their admirers; nor can we wonder that creations such as these, the product as it were of an instantaneous developement of circumstances, should occasion, among individuals thus situated, that perturbation of thought, that change of colour, and agitation of feature, which had so strongly attracted the observation of the elder group.

They were contemplated, however, by those who had not forgotten how much of the enjoyment of life is founded on these delicious day-dreams of the youthful mind, these lovely paintings of incipient passion, and they forbore to interrupt that interchange of soul, that silent language of the heart, to the expression of which no words, however eloquent, can ever hope to do justice.

It was only therefore, after a pause of some

minutes, that Colonel Burton ventured to enquire into the circumstances which had, for several years, so effectually screened from all search the fate and fortunes of his son. Sir Philip readily undertook to satisfy the eager curiosity of an affectionate father, and began a most interesting account of the escape of himself and his nephew from the battle of Worcester, of their residence together upon the continent, and of the means by which they had hitherto eluded detection since their return to England.

The narrative had produced an almost breathless attention on the part of its auditors, and at its close, the Colonel, after making his warmest acknowledgements to Sir Philip for the never ceasing protection which, he had extended to his son, and after commenting for a short time on the miseries and family disunion too often attendant on a state of civil war, again proposed that the whole party, as well for safety as convenience, should immediately adjourn to the Priory. We can there, he added, with most advantage to ourselves, wait the issue of events, and as, in obedience to the wishes of

Sir Gregory, I shall, in the mean time, continue to personate the character of lord of the mansion, we cannot, I think, be more securely lodged; more especially as it will now be my object to avoid, as much as possible, all connection with the neighbourhood.

The facilities, indeed, which the extent and structure of the Priory, and the very name of Colonel Burton, afforded for the purpose of concealment, were too obvious to be denied, and it was therefore agreed, that on the following evening, as soon as it should be sufficiently dusky to screen them from observation, Sir Philip and his guests should bid farewell to their cottage. This arrangement being made, the Colonel, Emily, and Mr. Melville, immediately departed, anxious to make due preparations, and give the necessary injunctions, for the reception, and safe accommodation of their friends.

(*To be continued.*)

No. XVII.

Musarum dona vocarem.

HORAT.

I would stile this work also the gift of the Muses.

Pursuits of Literature.

IT was with no small gratification to myself that in the thirty-ninth and fortieth numbers of my "Literary Hours," I endeavoured to attract the public eye to the pastoral and descriptive poetry of Robert Bloomfield, a native of the county of Suffolk; and it is with feelings of renewed pleasure, that I again voluntarily step forward in the hope of fixing the attention of the patrons and admirers of genius on the productions of another poet of the same district.

So numerous and so powerfully connected with the literary world, are now the candidates for poetic fame, so ardent and strenuous is the competition among them, and with such

almost unparalleled popularity and applause have a few favoured individuals been surrounded, that it has become an attempt of much difficulty and hazard for a retired and unrecommended disciple of the muses, whatever may be his merit, to procure that audience which is necessary to a due appreciation of his labours.

Confident, however, that the poem which I am about to notice requires only to be known to be admired, I have no doubt that, in bringing forward some of its many beauties, I shall not only be assisting the laudable ambition of rising talent, but conferring at the same time, a real obligation on my readers.

The work thus alluded to, and which has been published under the title of "The Vale of Slaughden," is the production of Mr. JAMES BIRD, a young man about thirty years of age, resident at Yoxford in Suffolk, and engaged in a mercantile line, and of whom, as there always exists an inclination to know something of the conduct of the individual who has gratified us by the display of more than ordinary intellect or imagination, it may not be impertinent to state, that in all the relations of life, I have

reason to believe his moral character such as must ever give to the influence of mind its best and truest value.

The first edition of the *Vale of Slaughden* was disposed of by subscription during the spring of last year; but as this impression though limited to the demands of the author's friends and neighbourhood, had met the eye of some literary judges whose approbation had been felt as decisive, it was thought advisable that a second and much larger edition should be given to the public from the London press. *

It is to this *second* edition, which appeared about three months after the first had been distributed, that I now call the attention of the lovers of poetry.

Though the title which Mr. Bird has given to his work, may lead to the supposition that it is altogether of a local and descriptive nature,

---

* "The Vale of Slaughden, a Poem. In five Cantos. By James Bird. A tale of the times of old. The deeds of other years. Ossian." Second Edition. London: Printed for Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, Paternoster-Row. 1819.

yet will the reader speedily discover, and probably to his no small gratification, that incident and not mere landscape-painting, forms the body of the poem. With the exception, indeed, of a few introductory lines, which form a pleasing and accurate picture of the scenery in which the opening occurrences of his story are placed, the whole is of a narrative complexion, a species of composition which, when well conducted, is only secondary to the drama in vivacity of appeal and intensity of interest.

Of the minor epic, as this department of poetical literature may be termed, we have lately enjoyed in our own country a rich and abundant harvest. So fertile, indeed, have been the last twenty years in productions of this nature, that not Italy herself, long and deservedly as she has been celebrated for fecundity in this class of composition, can now be said to outstrip us. It was towards the close of the last century, and with the last generation of poets, that this tendency began to develope itself; when the *Triumphs of Temper* of Mr. Hayley, the *Louisa* of Miss Seward, the *Arthur* of Mr. Hole, and the *Old Country Gentleman* of

Mr. Polwhele, in succession attracted the notice of the world. But it was reserved for the magic muse of our great Northern Minstrel, Mr. Walter Scott, the Ariosto of the North, as Lord Byron has termed him, to establish this minor species of narrative poetry as a favourite with the public. Not to mention the mere imitators of the style and manner of this great bard, who are now without number, it will sufficiently prove how much the excitement arising from the involution and developement of incident in poetry, has taken hold of the general mind, if we barely enumerate those who, choosing to emancipate themselves from the jingle of the octo-syllabic metre, have given to their fictions the more sonorous and dignified music of the couplet measure, that system of versification which Mr. Bird has judiciously adopted as the medium of his narrative, and which, from the great success which formerly attended its cultivation in the hands of Dryden, Pope, and Goldsmith, and since in those of their successors, and from the happy range which it enjoys between the stately march of blank verse, and the lively trip of the octo-syllabic line, may be

considered as peculiarly adapted for the expression of those events and circumstances which aspiring not to the majesty of the greater epic, have yet so much of the solemn, the pathetic, and even the sublime in their composition, as to require a strictly corresponding tone in the march and melody of the metre selected for their communication.

To the highly romantic, chivalric, and picturesque themes which Mr. Scott has so impressively told, the brisk measure of the verse of eight feet may not be deemed unaccordant; but, at the same time, it should be recollected, that the pentameter couplet is possessed of such a wide field of flexibility, as, excluding the drama, to form a happy vehicle for almost every subject which can occur between the awful and sublime imagery of Milton, and the light and ludicrous familiarity of Butler.

How well this has been exemplified in the narrative poetry of the present day, will not be denied by those who have maturely weighed the contrast which exists, both in subject and style, between the fictions of *Crabbe* and *Byron*, between the *Borough* and the *Tales of the Hall*

of the former, and the *Corsair* and *Lara* of the latter; or between these and the sweet, the highly-polished and classical couplets of *Bland* and *Hodgson*, as they come before us in the *Edwy and Elgiva*, and the *Four Slaves of Cythera* of the first of these poets, and the *Lady Jane Grey* and *Sir Edgar* of the second.

To these admirable specimens of the adaptation of the couplet to the relation of almost every variety of *incident* may be added the equally happy instances in which the same metre has been recently employed in the detail of pure sentiment and description. It will be sufficient to mention the *Pleasures of Memory* of Mr. Rogers, the *Scenes of Infancy* of Dr. Leyden, the *Pleasures of Hope* of Mr. Campbell, and the *Palestine* of Mr. Heber, in order to prove that however fashionable the octo-syllabic measure may have become, the harps of Pope and Goldsmith are not yet forgotten.

That Mr. Bird has thoroughly studied the great masters of the English couplet, from the spirited and varied harmony of Dryden, to the still more energetic metre of Lord Byron, will

be very adequately shown in the numerous passages which I shall have occasion to quote from his poem; and, I therefore, think it necessary in this place merely to observe, as the general result of this study, that his versification may, with few exceptions, be pronounced such, as in point of versatility and vigour of structure, as of beauty and melody of cadence, will bear comparison with some of the most finished models of the day.

From these few preliminary observations I now pass forward to a consideration of the poem itself, the opening scene of which has, as I have already observed, perhaps rather too exclusively given a title to the work.

The *Vale of Slaughden* is a district extending along a part of the East-Anglian coast from Thorp to the haven of Orford; having the sea on the east, and the river Alde, which washes it, on the west.* "Its present appearance," observes Mr. Bird, in his preface, "may be supposed to differ widely from that which it pre-

* See an interesting little publication intitled "Aldborough described," published by Nichols and Son.

sented in the ninth century; as there was anciently an immense forest, two miles east of the coast, at Dunwich, extending to a considerable distance parallel with the shore, which, at that time, was exceedingly steep and rocky."

After a faithful and characteristic description of the present features of this valley, the poet endeavours to recall to "fancy's mental sight," what was probably its appearance in ages long past by, and more particularly in that ever-memorable period of our history,

When Alfred ruled in Albion's happy land.

It was while this truly wise and patriotic monarch was laying the foundations of the present greatness of England, that, within the deepest recesses of the vale of Slaughden, then richly covered with protecting woods, *Conrade* and his daughter *Gonilda* sought a safe asylum from the busy, and then, indeed, tumultuous world. They were the sole but contented inhabitants of a lonely cottage:

Round its neat walls, the fragrant suckling grew,
And blooming roses drank the morning dew;

There nature planted amaranthine flowers;
Eternal verdure formed eternal bowers;
Peace sojourn'd there;—and hearts, untun'd to vice,
Beat wild with rapture in that paradise!

The humane and philosophic character of Conrade, the artless, amiable, and affectionate disposition of Gonilda, are then drawn at considerable length; and the author has painted the personal charms of his heroine, exhausted as such a theme might be deemed, not only with great delicacy and beauty, but with many of those discriminating touches which unequivocally indicate powers of no common order. Thus, after noticing the expressive eye of Gonilda as the unerring index of her mind, he has added four lines which, wherever they had been found, must have arrested attention, and influenced both the ear and heart.

In that dark eye there lived a nameless spell
Of heavenly light, within its crystal cell;
And he who gazed upon its bright domain,
Loved the soft charm, and longed to gaze again

That enthusiastic admiration for the beauties

of nature which is so generally the companion of the good and feeling mind, is represented as glowing with inextinguishable ardor in the breasts of Conrade and his daughter; and one fine evening, as they were wandering, as usual, on the sea-shore, watching the beauty of the western waves, while the sun was just sinking below the horizon, their attention was roused by some circumstances predictive of an approaching storm; for though from the mighty world of waters scarcely issued a murmur, and all seemed hushed and still, yet

——————————— glancing low,
The hovering sea-bird plumed her wing of snow,

and clouds were seen accumulating in the east in gigantic masses. They now left the vale, and had just reached the summit of a neighbouring cliff,

——————————— when in their sight,
The rising moon, majestic from afar,
Rolled through the trackless air her silver car,

a transitory splendour, however, which served but to show with more fearful distinctness, the

lurid and portentous aspect of the eastern hemisphere. At length

The blast yell'd hollow through the distant wood,
Rush'd o'er the trembling earth, and shook the
mighty flood!

and the storm in all its strength is then described with a spirit and energy of which the vigour of the couplet just quoted will enable the reader to form a pretty accurate judgment.

Gonilda, alarmed by the increasing violence of the tempest, is turning with her father to leave the spot, when their flight is suddenly arrested by the appearance of a ship in distress. The wreck which ensues is delineated with a powerful pencil, and the closing exclamation of the poet, as the vessel sinks to rise no more, is such as would reflect honour even on the page of Byron.

Oh! there was heard, amid the troubled sea,
The cry of death, and shriek of agony;
And there was seen the last embrace, that broke
But with the force of death's relentless stroke.

Agitated and painfully interested as we may suppose the spectators of this scene to have been, their sympathy was soon still further awakened on perceiving a youth clinging to the fragment of a broken oar, and endeavouring to reach the coast. They instantly returned to the beach, but finding neither skiff nor boat could live in such a sea, they were compelled to remain unassisting witnesses of the dreadful and almost hopeless struggle. At last, whilst Gonilda was fervently addressing that power whose arm alone could rescue, and when every hope of safety seemed expiring,

A mighty wave propelled him on the shore —
Cold as the billow which he lately pressed,
Pale as the foam upon that billow's crest;
Yet glowed his heart! — the overwhelming strife
Of giant waves had spared the breath of life!

With what eager anxiety they hastened to the assistance of the nearly exhausted sufferer, with what delight they beheld him recovering the powers of speech and motion, and with what fervent gratitude their assiduities were repaid, are told by the poet in a very natural and

affecting manner. They conduct him to their cottage, the old man exclaiming in the spirit of that social philanthropy, which distinguished his character, —

O! let it prove a suffering stranger's home!
My glowing fire thy frigid limbs shall warm,
My cot shall shield thee from the ruthless storm;
And cheering smiles, and friendly words express'd,
Shall wake thy hope, and lull thy fear to rest. —
They reach'd the peaceful cot; — the anxious sire
Cheer'd his lorn guest, and trimmed his kindling fire,
And spread the neat repast.

To be thus snatched as it were from the very grasp of death, and by the ministering aid, too, not merely of common humanity, but of the most interesting sympathy and beauty, was a vicissitude which must have opened the sternest bosom to the influence of every kind emotion. How deep and indelible was the impression on the heart of this young stranger, and how soon the feelings of gratitude were mingled in his breast with those of a more tender character,

may be easily conceived, and are, indeed, very delicately delineated; nor do we doubt the record of the poet, when he tells us, that

On joy's light wing the eve sped fast away
And chased the dark remembrance of the day.

Great, however, as their curiosity was to learn the history of their guest, who he was, and whence he came, they forbore to urge the request, in consideration of his fatigue; — the couch is gotten ready, and, well prepared to enjoy its blessings, he sinks into the arms of sleep.

It is then that the lovely daughter of Conrade gives way to the impulse of her own feelings:

——————— in that peaceful hour,
The soft harp, warbling from Gonilda's bower,
Breathed sweetly wild:

I.

Rest, stranger, rest — the storm is o'er;
Tired with their rage the winds are sleeping:
The tempest's howl is heard no more,
Nor cry of hapless seamen weeping.

Swift from the heaven the dark clouds fly,
The moon again illumes the sky,
Her beam is dancing on the shore,
Rest, stranger, rest — the storm is o'er.

II.

For thee, perchance, hot tears are shed;
For thee, whom cruel fate doth sever
From all thou lov'st, with joyless dread,
Oh! they may deem thee lost for ever!
Yet, chase that mournful thought away,
And thou may'st see a brighter day:
Despair not — nor thy fate deplore;
Rest, stranger, rest — the storm is o'er.

III.

Or does one lov'd till death bewail
Thy long-lost smile, with aching bosom,
And frenzied eye, and cheek all pale,
Which once was fair as vernal blossom?
Oh! she may wake from sorrow's dream,
To hail her soul's departed beam;
Then tears of love will fall no more:
Rest, stranger rest — the storm is o'er.

IV.

And thou hast 'scaped the hideous wa'e!
Delightful thought! dispelling sadness:
No more thou dread'st the cold sea grave,
And I may tune my harp to gladness.
Light gliding o'er the level main,
The kyule[1] spreads her sail again;
No lightning glares, nor billows roar:
Rest, stranger, rest — the storm is o'er!

With this beautiful song, which exhibits Mr. Bird's powers of lyrical composition in a very advantageous point of view, and whose tender sentiment and soothing melody, breathe over the spirits a sensation of the most consolatory sweetness and composure, the first canto of the "Vale of Slaughden," gracefully terminates.

The second opens with a truly poetical and spirited comparison between the anticipating fears and apprehensions of the pilgrim who is traversing the deserts of Arabia, and those ima-

[1] "The smaller vessels of the Anglo-Saxons were called kyules."

ginary evils, an indulgence in which so often renders our pilgrimage through life a scene of wretchedness and discontent. The poet then, reverting to his narrative, brings his characters before us as seated, on the ensuing morning, in Conrade's garden shade, and he paints the beauties of this little paradise, and the eloquently expressed gratitude of the stranger to his preservers, in a very pleasing and impressive manner. From this lovely spot they are represented as beholding the distant prospect of the sea and winding strand; and, after enjoying for some time its varied and picturesque features, Conrade ventures to solicit of his guest the story of his life, a request, which, if his high obligation to the father had not sufficiently enforced, the fascinating smile and sweetly imploring eye of the daughter would have rendered irresistible.

Mr. Bird has told this tale of suffering and of sorrow with all that circumstantiality and effect which we might promise to ourselves from the peculiar situation of the supposed reciter. The opening is, indeed, so singularly graceful, and is given in a strain of versification

so musical, and yet so spirited, that to pass it by without transcription, might be almost deemed unpardonable. Thus eloquently, then, does this youthful stranger retrace the too fleeting happiness of his earliest years.

On Tamar's * fertile banks, where beauty reigns,
And smiling plenty decks the verdant plains,
Where the pure stream in gentle murmur flows,
Long lived my sire, in undisturbed repose.
Far from his heart malignant passion fled;
The storms of life rushed harmless o'er his head;
His deeds untainted e'en by envy's breath,
His guileless life removed the fear of death;
My mother lived, his joy or grief to share,
Love tuned their ardent hearts, and revelled there.
I was their only child — the light that shone
Through days of wedded bliss, for ever gone!
Days of lost love, unclouded by distress,
And Edwin all their hope — their happiness!
Our herds were many, and with rural pride
Each morn I led them to the mountain's side;
Or o'er the flowery vale contented strayed,
And oft beneath some hawthorn's grateful shade

* "This river, by Ptolemy called Tamara, rises in the north-west part of Devonshire."

I watched my flock, and [illegible] j[illegible]mmd reed
To many an ardent song of warlike deed;
Or touched a softer, more enchanting strain,
Breathing the tale of some enamoured swain;
Or, lulled by some lone bard, in fancy's dream,
I mused, delighted with his magic theme,
Of heroes striving on the martial wold,
And lived in thought amid the days of old!
Full oft, at eve, around our cheerful fire,
Intent I listened to my aged sire,
Who told of valiant deeds in Runic story,
That roused my soul by some bold patriot's glory.
Oh! how my heart would burn, to hear him tell
How Egbert conquered, and how Osmund fell;*
Or, how the warlike Regner met his fate,
In Ella's dungeon, dark and desolate,
Where the fell serpent, with its venom'd tongue,
Poisoned his blood! while yet the hero sung
His ode to death, and, in that dying strain,
Laughed loudly at his foe, and mocked his pain!†

---

* "Osmund, a great Saxon commander, fell in the battle fought near the river Carr, in Dorsetshire, between the army of King Egbert and the Danes."

† "Regner Lodbrog was a celebrated king, poet, warrior, and (what was the same thing in those ages) pirate, who reigned in Denmark about the beginning of the ninth century. After many warlike expeditions by sea and land, he was taken

Thus passed, exempt from wrong, our varied hours,
Life's path secure from thorns, and strewn with flowers;
Blessed in the ties of social love, we knew
Ourselves the happiest of the happy few!

The scene of peace was soon broken in upon by an irruption of the Danes, who, as usual, desolating every thing around them with fire and sword, consumed the happy home where Edwin and his parents resided; and, notwithstanding the most gallant resistance both from father and son, made a prisoner

---

in battle, by his adversary Ella, king of Northumberland. War in those rude ages was conducted with dreadful inhumanity. Prisoners were reserved only to be put to death by torture. Regner was accordingly thrown into a dungeon, to be stung to death by serpents. He contemplated his fate without a groan of sorrow; and, while he was dying, he composed his celebrated Quida, or Death Song, wherein he records all the valiant achievements of his life, and threatens Ella with vengeance. The moment of his death was signalised by a laugh of defiance.

"*The hours of my life are passed away, I die laughing!*"

Last stanza of the dying ode of Regner Lodbrog. See *Mallet's Northern Antiquities.*"

of the latter, and left the wretched mother weltering in her blood. Edwin, meantime was conveyed on board the Danish bark, and subjected to every taunt and insult which the ferocious malice of his foes could suggest. Thus destitute and forlorn, a prey to consuming grief, and dreading the worst evils which slavery and cruelty could inflict, he turns in agony to the recollections of his family and friends, and laments his deprivations in language which must make its way to every feeling heart.

Farewell, my native land! my friends, adieu!
With frantic love my heart still beats for you;
Farewell, my mother's bleeding corse! — may
heaven
Avenge the deed by which thy death was given!
And oh, my sire! my earthly hope! my weal!
Did'st *thou*, too, fall beneath the victor's steel?
Oh! if thou liv'st, may fortune grant to thee
That soothing peace, which she denies to me!
Farewell! ye scenes that graced my native bowers,
Ye hills and dales, ye streams and blooming flowers!

Your charms shall bless my lingering sight no more;
Far, far remote, on some unfriendly shore,
Edwin, forlorn, unseen by pity's eye,
Unknown shall live — and unlamented die!

The hour of retribution, however, hung over the heads of the exulting pirates; for the storm which threw Edwin on the hospitable shores of East-Anglia, overwhelmed them to a man in the raging deep.

The effect of this narrative on the feelings of Conrade is very happily imagined by the poet, especially at the moment when he is listening to the ruthless atrocity of the Dane; and the simile which illustrates his green and kindly old age, is entitled to much praise, both for its novelty and propriety.

His trembling hand, as 'twere by instinct, felt
Where erst his sword hung shining from his belt:
His arm was feeble, — and his sword was gone, —
Yet, through the winter of his years, there shone
The high-born vigour of a soul divine.
So crisped snows oppress the towering pine;

Yet, when 'tis ruffled by the mountain gale,
The green leaf shows beneath the freezing veil!

After an animated declamation on the turbulent passions of man, and on his inordinate love of warfare, Conrade offers to his young friend several topics of consolation, among which the probability of his father having escaped the hands of his enemies, and the rumour of Alfred being still in existence, are the most prominent and consolatory. Of what might yet be expected, indeed, from the patriotic valour of their king, he speaks in a lofty tone of enthusiasm:

'Tis said, in some sequestered spot, retired—
Our valiant monarch lives!—
For not the northman's murderous rage can tame
His arm of strength, his soul of bursting flame,
Which, when the clouds of fate life's heaven deform,
Soars, like the sea-bird, highest in the storm!

The good old man concludes with the cheering expression of his hopes that Edwin will see his native home again, and, in the meantime, he

tenders him with a frankness and cordiality which cannot for a moment be doubted, the shelter of his peaceful cottage, an offer which is rendered irresistibly seducing by the gentle and compassionate solicitations of Gonilda.

Yes, Edwin! here in envied peace repose;
Estrange thy sorrow; here forget thy woes.
Thy fate demands our care; misfortune's eye
Shuns not our cot in hopeless agony:
To calm the sadness of a heart distressed,
This, this is zeal, the noblest and the best;
The sunshine of the soul, divinely given,
That lights it on to bliss — from bliss to heaven!
To smooth the barb of misery's venomed s ng,
Be ours the task — the pleasing deed may bring
Some charm to memory on a distant day,
Soothing and dear: — here, gentle stranger, stay:
Grieved, with my sire, I heard thy hapless tale,
With him, I greet thee to my native vale. —

On Edwin's ear her gentle accents fell,
Soft as the dew on buds of asphodel,
When the sirocco, with his parching breath,
Has changed the floweret's hue to that of death!
The youth rejoiced — in this secluded spot
No greatness lured him, and he wooed it not: —

'Tis no false charm of grandeur that bestows
Peace to the heart —to weary eyes repose;
The towering oak may feel the whirlwind's power,
While, all unruffled, smiles the humble flower;
And clouds may frown upon the mountain's crest,
While gladdening sun-beams on the valley rest!

The canto closes with this beautiful address, and I may truly say, that while in point of taste in expression, and sweetness in versification, it speaks all-powerfully in favour of the poetical talents of Mr. Bird, the tenor of its moral sentiment is, at the same time, such, as must reflect equal credit on the rectitude and goodness of his heart.

No. XVIII.

Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth:
But, either it was different in blood;
Or else misgraffed, in respect of years;
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends;
Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE dreadful state to which England was reduced towards the close of the ninth century, by the numerous successful incursions of the Danes, and, which, owing to the want of a naval power, Alfred, notwithstanding all his heroic achievements, was for a long time unable to arrest, has been transmitted to us in colours of the darkest character by many of our old historians: and Mr. Bird, the circumstances of whose narrative take place during the worst

period of this sanguinary and eventful struggle, commences the third part of his "Vale of Slaughden," with a description of a similar kind, and which he has judiciously assigned to the mournful feelings and impassioned eloquence of one of the Saxon Minstrels.

The tones which issue from the lips of this desolate bard, are, as might be supposed, of a character "pensive, solemn, wild, and broken;" for he has not only to lament the bloody triumph of the foe, but he looks forward in despair for the return of his gallant but unfortunate king, and he, consequently, closes what seemed to him the requiem of his country's fate, with the melancholy assertion that hope was no longer an inmate of his bosom

In sooth he deemed his earthly lays were o'er,
And that in hall, or on the plain, no more
To listening Thanes, or armed warrior-clan,
His aged hand would wake that harp again!

The poet, however, turns from this desponding theme, to one more congenial with his own feelings, and which he has introduced by a pic-

ture of evening worthy of the pencil of Claude Lorraine: —

The sun beneath the trembling wave has set;
A lonely star, eve's silver coronet,
Beams in the west; and o'er the blue expanse,
Like quivering fires, the golden shadows dance:
Soft odour breathes from every opening flower:
Hushed is the breeze; this dear delightful hour
Is all unruffled as a summer sky;
And I must tune to love my minstrelsy.

The residue of this canto is, therefore, devoted to the developement of the passion which is gradually awakened in the hearts of Edwin and Gonilda; and it is drawn both in its infancy and maturity, with a sweetness, delicacy, and pathos, which has seldom been surpassed. The doubts and diffidence with which sincere affection is ever at first accompanied, were increased in the bosom of Edwin by observing the depressed and anxious state of Gonilda's mind. That some silent sorrow rankled in her heart, was but too evident, and at length, when accident put him in possession of the secret, it was but to feel, after momentary rap-

ture, a return, though in a more intense degree, of that mingled sensation of hope and fear, which had already so deeply agitated his bosom. Wandering one evening on the sea-shore, he overheard the voice of Gonilda, lamenting, as she sate in a retired cave of the cliff, the ties of a previous engagement, —

The thoughtless promise of a former day,

and regretting that the grave had not closed over her head before she became thus mentally, and as it were involuntarily, unfaithful to the injured Leof; — then truth, she exclaimed,

——————————— had yet been mine;
Nor Edwin won the heart I vowed was thine.

Unconscious that this confession had met the ear of her lover, she returns to her cottage with the resolution of burying in hopeless silence the sorrows of her heart; a determination, however, which was shortly afterwards rendered fruitless by the occurrence of a trial for which she had not ventured to prepare her mind.

Edwin, anxious to learn if his father yet survives, now mentions to Conrade his intention of revisiting the scene of his once happy childhood, a proposal which is prefaced by the poet with the following tender lines, illustrative of the soothing gratification which is often derived from returning to the home of our youth : —

Dear to the soul is stream, and hill, and glade,
Where, robed in innocence, our childhood strayed;
How sweet, when worn with care and worldly strife,
To seek the scenes that charmed our early life;—
If there a parent's hallowed greetings bless
The filial heart to crown its happiness;
O! then, the hour is decked in pleasure's guise;
The spot, adorned with flowers of paradise!

This design, however, though natural and praise-worthy, and though accompanied on the part of Edwin, by the ardently declared hope of soon re-enjoying their society, could not be contemplated by Gonilda without much inward struggle and distress, nor, when the hour of separation approached, without revealing the anguish of her mind. The lines in which

these emotions are pourtrayed, close with an exquisite and most beautifully expressed eulogium on the sympathy of the female heart.

With broken sighs Gonilda's bosom rose,
Fair as the lily, chaste as Alpine snows;
While down her pallid cheek a tear was stealing,
The hopeless anguish of her heart revealing.
Oh! there is something in the gentle tear
That falls from woman's eye, so soft, so dear;
There is a magic which that gem bestows,
That speaks the tender source from which it flows;
Warm from the heart, the precious drop can tell
The feeling's power that rests unspeakable!

The fears of apprehensive affection, the sufferings to which her Edwin may be exposed in such an unsettled state of the country, and during such a toilsome and distant journey, now press upon her mind, and induce her, notwithstanding she cannot but approve the motive which has given birth to the attempt, to paint the privations which await him in the darkest colours, and even to intimate a wish that he would yet desist from his purpose.

——————My soul admires,
The filial love that Edwin's heart inspires:
But, far remote thy native valley lies;
Drear are the scenes thy dubious path supplies;
Where, when the night falls chilly on thy head,
Wilt thou, sad wanderer, find thy lonely bed?
No friendly comfort near, to hush the sigh
That thou may'st breathe in weary agony.
Then, why should Edwin from our valley stray?

In answer to this appeal, he endeavours by every soothing art to dissipate the alarm which has taken such possession of her mind, and declares with the most affectionate ardour, that his love for her, and the hope of being re-united under circumstances of more assured happiness, will be to him a constant and never-failing source of the most heart-felt consolation and delight. The poet, however, closes the scene with a very pathetic delineation of what must be the real feelings of those who, living but for each other, part, perhaps to meet no more! It is sufficient praise to add, that the cadence and expression of the lines are such as to do justice to the tenderness of the sentiment which they convey.

That hour is cheerless to the youthful heart,
When doomed from all it loves on earth to part:
The fears — the clouded hopes — the last farewell
That dies upon the lip:— 'twere hard to tell
Of that tumultuous pang; that hopeless pain,
That doubt which asks "*Oh! shall we meet again?*"

Yet the moment which finally tears them asunder is deferred until the ensuing morning when, after a fearful and disturbed night, the horrors of which are drawn with a powerful pencil, Gonilda, pale and despairing, and accompanied by her father, again beholds her Edwin. The old man blesses him with much emotion, and retires,

While the sad maid, o'erwhelmed by mute despair,
In melancholy silence drooped her head,
Pale as a statue bending o'er the dead!

The last "farewell," however, issuing from the lips of Edwin, recalls her to a sense of renewed suffering, to agonising reflections on the strength of her present passion, and on the ill-requited love of Leof. The conflict was beheld by the youth not without the most affectionate sympathy: —

In transport Edwin o'er her beauties hung;
Her parting look his tender bosom wrung. —
The eye of love that sorrow's dew-drop wore;
The lips that met, perchance to meet no more;
The last embrace, and gentle sighs that rose,
Betrayed the pang that love alone bestows;

And he reiterates the assurance that the remembrance of her attachment shall be —

In good or ill — in peace or deadliest strife,
The hope, the joy, the amulet of life.

With this declaration he rushes from her arms; and Gonilda, after intently gazing on his receding form, till it vanishes from her view, at length bursts into the following impassioned soliloquy: —

Alas! untimely lost! no more I hear
The voice of love that charmed my listening ear;
Ah, no! — my Edwin has for ever fled, —
Ye winds of heaven! blow lightly o'er his head;
And thou, fair sun! oh, shed thy kindest ray,
To cheer the lonely wanderer on his way. —
Thou, towering steep! and native valley dear!
No more his voice thy caverned echoes hear; —

Say, shall he e'er return? — my tortured brain
Fires at the thought, and throbs with madd'ning pain.
And thou, too cruel wave! oh! had thy might
Plunged the lost Edwin in eternal night!
Immersed him deep within thy oozy bed,
A lifeless form, amid the ghastly dead!
Then had Gonilda ne'er been doomed to know
The cruel torture of this frenzied woe. —
Alas! my soul, by passion's tempest tost,
Proclaims my hope, my love, my comfort lost!

We must now, wafted on the magic pinions of the poet, pursue the footsteps of his youthful pilgrim, who, on the fourth evening of his journey, and at the close of a tempestuous day, enters, as the sun is sinking below the horizon, a gloomy and extensive forest. Here, after wandering for some time hopeless and benighted, with the howling of the wind, and the hoarse barking of the wolf continually resounding in his ears, he at last perceives the glimmering of a distant light, and which, on a nearer approach, is found to issue from the humble dwelling of a neat-herd, who kindly invites

the stranger to enter, and offers him a shelter for the night.

Near the blazing hearth-stone of this hospitable peasant, Edwin is instantly struck by the appearance of a martial and majestic figure, to whom the bard now introduces us by a masterly and characteristic description of his person and manner.

Neat was the cot — and by its glowing fire,
A thoughtful warrior sat; refulgent near,
Hung hauberk, helmet, seix, and deathful spear;
His well-strung bow lay by: with anxious care
He trimmed each arrow, then replaced it there,
On bending string; and drew, with nervous might,
As though the foe already urged its flight;
Gazed on the weapon's point, yet frowned the while;
And proved its barbed steel, and forced a vengeful smile!
He rolled around his dark majestic eye,
Each glance, each movement, spoke his dignity.
Yet, on his brow, a trace of sorrow dwelt,
That told of cares, but more of wrongs he felt!
There beamed the image of an ample mind,
Formed not to follow, but to lead mankind;
His look, that raised the trembling coward's fear,
Claimed a more noble, more unbounded sphere;

His lofty mien, in every action shown,
Adorned the cot with lustre not its own!
So some tall pine, that graced the mountain's brow;
Forced by an earthquake to the vale below,
Still, in majestic pomp, its branches rears,
And all its once-exalted grandeur wears;
Surpassing all the valley e'er supplied,
It towers at once its glory, and its pride!

To the natural enquiry on the part of the seeming chieftain, as to what had drawn the footsteps of the youth to this almost impervious glen, Edwin replies by a narrative of his misfortunes, which, as told with great energy and feeling, and terminating with the glowing expression of his hopes, that Alfred may yet avenge his country's wrongs, induces his agitated auditor to reveal himself to the astonished youth as that very Alfred, greater even in the hour of his adversity than when surrounded by all the pomp and circumstance of successful war.

To say that the portrait of this patriotic monarch has suffered nothing in the hands of Mr. Bird, is saying too little; he has, in fact, supported the character not only with uniform truth and vigour, and with a steady adherence

to the record of history, but he has given to it that epic force and dignity, that warmth of colouring, and that breadth and boldness of outline, which indicate both in conception and execution, the fancy and the tact of no inferior master. —But I proceed with the story, in which, if I am not much mistaken, the reader will soon find sufficient proof of the propriety of the eulogium.

The effect on the mind of Edwin from the unexpected discovery of his much-suffering king, was, in the first instance, a reverential silence, and then, the homage of the knee. From this posture, however, he is soon raised by the monarch, who telling him that this is not a moment

> To reverence kings divested of their power,

promises him his protection, and the speedy means of avenging his injuries on the common foe. He then acquaints him with the recent success of Oddune, one of his Thanes, who, after defeating Hinguar, had seized the magic standard of the Danes; but he adds, that the

enemy, having been since reinforced by the powers of three mighty chieftains, Guthrun, Oscital, and Amund, lay now entrenched, secure and confident in their strength, on the barren plains of Eddington. Their vanity and presumption, however, and consequently their weakness, had not escaped the detection, of Alfred, who thus relates, in accordance with the narrative of our ancient chroniclers, the address by which he ascertained their careless and unprepared state:

Thither I lately strayed, in minstrel's guise,
And touched my harp to Runic melodies;
Unknown, I passed o'er all the martial field;
There sloth, and revelry, and pride, revealed
The conduct of the chiefs — secure and vain;
Regardless all, that war might rage again! —
Charmed with my solemn harp's melodious sound,
They led me, where, high towering o'er the ground,
Rose Guthrun's* royal tent. — The prince enjoined
A warlike strain to rouse his mighty mind. —

* For an account of the character and fate of Guthrun, I refer my readers to the third number of this work.

With willing hand I touched the echoing string,
And sang the fall of Albion's ruined King!
They heard entranced, and caught the martial fire,
And blest the hand that swept the sounding lyre!
They little thought, that minstrel's hand might deal
A thousand deaths from unresisting steel;
Nor deemed one foe, the sound that pleased him most,
Prelusive, tuned a requiem for his ghost!

He then proceeds to inform Edwin, that the very next morning will witness the march of his forces, now concealed in the isle of Æthelingay, to join their brethren in arms at Selwood, and he closes the detail with an invitation to which the heart of Edwin immediately responds.

Collect thy soul, unite thy fate to mine;
With me resolve to blast the Dacian name,
To die with glory, or to live with fame!

The assemblage of the chieftains, and the junction of their clans, are then described in most animated language, and with a very interesting allusion to the fate of the brave Earl

Algar, who, in the September of 870, had fallen with all his men in defending Kesteven, a district of Lincolnshire, against a vastly superior force of the Danes. The determined valour with which these self-devoted heroes perished in defence of their freedom, had long a powerful influence in exciting the courage, and sustaining the perseverance of their surviving countrymen.

The Chiefs were met, prepared for warlike deeds;
Proud Selwood echoed to the bounding steeds;—
There joined the Mercian, and Silurian train,*
And Anglian heroes throng'd the spacious plain.—
Oh! there appeared full many a gallant clan
Of warlike Thane, and valiant Ealdorman.
For they were emulous of glory, won
By patriot chiefs, at fatal Lacundon,
When the brave Algar, with his warrior men,
Drenched with their blood the earth of Kesteven;
Where there was weeping o'er the early fall
Of gallant Chief, and hoary Seneschal,
Who died in battle for their native land.—
O, ever glorious and immortal band!

* "The Silures were a warlike people, who inhabited the banks of the Severn."

Your fame survives, while, brushed by time's light
wing,
Columns, and aisles, and towers, are mouldering
To trackless dust;—your glory cannot die,
Embalmed in tears of grateful memory!

Alfred, who now feels deeply interested by the generous zeal which his young friend displays in his cause, embraces every opportunity of perfecting him in all the duties of the accomplished chieftain.

He taught him well to drive the rapid car;
To mark each varied signal of the war;
To thrust the lance, to rear the bossy shield,
And bear the battle through the sounding field.

Yet, elevated as Edwin was by the love and hope of glory, he had not forgotten the unhappy Gonilda. The remembrance of her attachment still formed the charm that bound him to existence, and, except when the occasional recollection of her *fatal promise*, and of *Leof's slighted heart*, intruded on his mind, breathed over

his spirits a sensation of unutterable complacency and delight.

Truly wretched, however, had become the unfortunate object of his affections; for Leof had returned, — returned to witness that heart which he had fondly deemed his own, estranged from him, and given to another! The shock was such as, at times, to affect his reason, and Gonilda, condemned for some days to behold his sufferings, and to weep incessantly "over the tomb of lost fidelity," had herself fallen a prey to the deepest despondency, the victim of hopeless and incurable anguish.

Edwin, meantime, is preparing, with his heroic sovereign, to attack the Danes, who are represented by the poet, on the faith of history, as perfectly unaware of the impending storm. The picture of their thoughtless revelry, and of its probable consequences, is finished with many spirited and pathetic touches.

No royal banner in the air was streaming;
No careless Dane of war or death was dreaming:
No echoing horn resounded loud and shrill;
No nightly watch-fire blazed upon the hill.

The Dacian warriors, undisturbed by fear,
Deemed not that Alfred and his host were near!
Along their camp was heard the joyous glee
Of thoughtless chiefs, in midnight revelry;
And many an eye bright beamed with rapture then,
That ah! ere long, must never beam again!
And young hearts leaped to music's dulcet breath,
Which, ere another night, must sleep in death!
What, if the moon shine brightly on them now,
Gilding the casque on many a hero's brow;
While her pure silver rays, in splendour seem
But fainter blushes of the noon-day beam!—
What, if she shine so calmly, sweetly fair,
As though no cloud could dim the lustre there;
If now she sleep in peace on land and flood,
To-morrow's sun, alas! may rise in blood!

These ferocious warriors are, at length, aroused from their dream of security; and, filled with shame, anger, and revenge, they seize tumultuously their arms, and hurry to the field with loud and discordant shouts. Vehemently do they call upon their sanguinary gods, and the invocation which issues from their mouths, is concluded by a pledge, which, while it exhibits the lyrical powers of our bard in a striking

point of view, displays, at the same time, his intimacy with the mythology of the Gothic Edda.

By the flow of Balder's blood ;*
The dwarfs of the rock, and the elfs of the flood!
By the mystic tree that grows,
Where the serpent's venom flows ;†

---

* "Balder was the second son of the god Odin. The account of his death, occasioned by a branch of misletoe, may be seen in the *Edda*, fab. .

"The dwarfs were, among the Danes, the forgers of enchanted armour, upon which, neither swords, nor the art of magic, could make any impression. In many countries of the north, the people are still firmly persuaded of the existence of dwarfs. In Iceland, at this day, the good folks show the very rocks and hills in which they maintain that there are swarms of these subterraneous men, of the most tiny size, but delicate figures."

† "According to the opinions entertained by the Danes, the capital of the gods, or the sacred city, was under the ash *Ydrasil*, where the gods assembled every day, and administered justice. That ash they believed to be the greatest and best of all trees: its branches extended themselves over the whole world, and reached above the heavens: it had three roots, extremely distant from each other; one of them was among the gods: another among the giants; and the third covered *Nifilheim*, or hell. Under this root was the fountain *Vergelmer*, whence flow the infernal rivers: it was gnawed upon below by the monstrous serpent *Nidhoger*. — See Edda, fab. viii."

By the mace of mighty Thor;*
By his iron gloves of war;
By the black infernal river;
By the fire that burns for ever!
By the meteors of the air;
By the lightning's livid glare;
By the dreadful pealing thunder;
By every hidden source of wonder;
By all the secrets gods may know;
By things above, and things below;
We the pirates' oath do swear,
To murder the foe, and not to spare!
To shed their blood! and n o save
One Saxon chief from the desolate grave!

The fifth and last canto of this beautiful poem, which opens with a delineation of the dawn of day, places Alfred before us, armed, and ready to direct the assault of his impatient

* "Thor was the oldest son of Odin, the northern Mars. He was called Asa Thor, or the Lord Thor. He is said to have possessed three very precious things; the first is a mace or club, called *Miolner;* the second jewel he possessed, was called the *Belt of Prowess;* when he put it on, he became as strong again as he was before. The third, which was also very precious, were his *Gauntlets,* or Gloves of Iron, which he always wore when he laid hold of the handle of his mace."

warriors. The attitude and martial bearing of the monarch are finely conceived, and the address which follows to his companions in arms, the simile which illustrates their rushing to the contest, and the picture of their royal leader at its close, are, I will not hesitate to say, among the best specimens which we possess, of poetic eloquence, and nervous description.

There will be found, indeed, throughout the first of these highly finished paragraphs, such a spirit of animation, and pathos of appeal, and throughout the second such a splendour and picturesqueness of imagery, as cannot fail, I should imagine, to substantiate what might otherwise be deemed a too partial estimate of their merit. But I hasten to place them before my readers.—It is thus then that our immortal Alfred addresses his compatriot band: —

" O, friends!—O, warriors!—sharers of my fate;
Ye noble guardians of the Saxon state;
This day the foe is near;—and glory's rays,
Converging round us with transcendant blaze,
Illume the path to everlasting fame,
And shed their lustre o'er each hero's name!

Nor shed in vain: — By Albion's power o'erthrown,
Your country's fading glory, and your own;
By every magic charm that sweetens life;
The fond endearment of the anxious wife;
By every transport tender love inspires;
By helpless children lisping for their sires;
By all the bliss our native homes impart,
And all the social ties that glad the heart;
By Saxon blood that pirates caused to flow,
Oh! hurl destruction on the guilty foe! —
Lives there a man, among my warrior band,
Who would not bleed, to save his native land
From such remorseless foes, as now excite
Each hero's bosom to the coming fight?
Is there a man, would live an abject slave,
To weep, a captive, o'er his freedom's grave?
I need not urge it, warriors! — well I know,
Each martial soul but burns to meet the foe.
Hark! — the wild shouting of the Dacian host
Strikes on my ear! — now all is won or lost!
Fame gives her summons; hear her glorious call;
And learn from me to conquer or to fall!"

As pours the flood from Niagara's steep,
Rough, tumbling, foaming, thundering to the deep!
With noisy tumult roars the province round,
While all Ontario echoes to the sound;

So loud, so vast, with such resistless might,
Rushed Alfred's squadrons to the direful fight!
Tall, in the van, appeared the King; — his spear
Daunted the foemen, as it brandished near!
Oh! there was terror in the very name
Of that bold Cyning, fighting for the fame
Of his dear land, which, since his reason's birth,
He deemed the Eden of this lovely earth!
And now, brave Chief! thou art its leading star,
That shin'st resplendent through the cloud of war;
The hope — the terror, of the bloody heath,
The beacon of the field, whose flame is death!

The battle is then described as raging with the utmost fury, whilst Alfred, foremost where danger and competition seemed most imminent, scatters fear and devastation in his path: —

Oh! he was mighty as the ocean flood,
And where his strong arm fell, it fell in blood!

At length Hinguar, who beheld whole squadrons dispersing before the terror of his sword, opposes himself to the torrent, and a combat ensues between him and Alfred. He soon falls, however, beneath the prowess of the English

monarch, and the Danes, disheartened by the death of their leader, break their ranks, and are routed with prodigious slaughter.

In the interim, Edwin, following the example of his king, has distinguished himself by the most heroic achievements. He is now in pursuit of the flying enemy, when his course is suddenly arrested by one dauntless chief, who, with a wildness in his aspect, and a fury in his voice approximating to madness, rushes on him in vindictive wrath. A contest more than usually fierce takes place; ferocity and revenge seem to actuate the soul of the stranger, while Edwin, inflamed by the enraged spirit of his opponent, assails him with tremendous energy. The stranger, at last sinks, crushed and bleeding at the feet of Edwin; an expression of unearthly wildness still glares in his eye, and while, in faultering accents, he welcomes the approach of death, he confesses that a spirit of hatred and despair has driven him to fight against his native land; — his senses begin to wander, yet he lives to utter sounds that in an instant blast the peace and prospects of his conqueror. He asks him, with frantic agony, if he had ever loved — and

the names of *Leof and Gonilda* pass his closing lips.

Horror and pity now agitate the conflicting bosom of the survivor. He bends for some time in silent anguish over the body of his rival, till at length the language of sorrow and contrition breaks forth, and he laments in all the bitterness of unavailing grief, the fate which has condemned him to be the instrument of such unintentional and irreparable misery. He then again sinks into a state of unutterable wretchedness from which, however, he is soon aroused by reiterated shouts of victory! The foe had, in fact, been completely driven from the field, their camp stormed, and the shattered residue of their forces compelled to take shelter in an adjacent fortress.

It was now near midnight, and the Saxon chiefs lay around the walls, waiting for the dawn of day, when Edwin, tempted by the splendour of the moon, and the silence which prevailed around, left the royal tent. It was his purpose to survey the strength and compass of the castle; but, while cautiously examining the guarded portals, a sound passed by him, and presently

a voice which seemed to issue from a grated tower, arrested his attention. It was plaintive, and occasionally mingled with the solemn tones of the harp; it told, in fact, of the approach of death, that the existence of the captive who now complained, was to be closed at the rising of the sun. What, however, were the sensations of Edwin, when, from the circumstances alluded to by the prisoner, and from the casual mention of his name, as he emphatically repeated that when the sun relumined the horizon the wretched *Osmund* was to die, he discovered his own father in the person of the unhappy victim! the poet has very properly thrown a veil over the convulsive agony of the ill-fated youth, and passes on to the transactions of the ensuing morning. Osmund is led forth to execution; but at the moment when the lifted axe is about to descend, an arrow from the bow of Alfred pierces the heart of the murderer, and, at the same instant, the monarch is beheld on the tower, waving a flaming torch in his hand, and leading on his warriors to the work of destruction. In a few minutes the fortress is involved in all the horrors of conflagration;

tower after tower falls thundering into ruins, and the Danes, terror-struck and trembling at the sight, sue for mercy and for life! They implore no savage nor relentless foe. Alfred listens to their prayer; he sheaths the sword; and the poet immediately bursts forth into a noble and highly merited encomium on the exalted virtues of this matchless chieftain.

The King, whose soul was generous as brave,
Lived but to vanquish — vanquished but to save!
Illustrious Chief! thy name transcends the praise
The bard can give thee in these distant days:
Thy spotless fame, thy daring deeds sublime,
Borne on the rapid wing of fleeting time,
Shed such a radiance as he hurries by,
A flame that will not fade, and cannot die!

He then proceeds to notice the very extraordinary literary and philosophic talents of the monarch, justly observing, that he was a phenomenon in that age of ignorance —

——————— a lonely spark
That shone, when all around was drear and dark,

A splendid ray — a beam of heavenly light:
A comet, gliding through a gloomy night!

It was now the grateful employment of Alfred to reward the gallant exertions of his followers, and Edwin received the highest honours which military investiture could bestow; the purple robe, the gold-sheathed sword and jewelled belt. He was, indeed, as far as a father's love and monarch's praise could go, an object of envy and admiration.

But Misery had marked him for her own, and he was destined to feel that wayward fate which so often in this world crushes to the dust the gentle and the noble heart. Mournfully, yet beautifully, has Mr. Bird remarked that —

He who glides smoothly o'er life's waveless sea,
Nor feels the chilling blast of misery,
Looks on the victim by the whirlwind tost,
And marvels how his peace was wrecked or lost!

a reflection which turns the current of his narrative to that once happy shore where Conrade

and his daughter had enjoyed the blessings of domestic comfort — now, alas! the scene of frenzied grief and solitary suffering. The transition is made with all the spirit and the feeling of a poet's heart.

No zephyr softly o'er the valley swept;
'Twas eve, and ocean's mighty spirit slept.
Why stands Gonilda on the craggy steep,
All wildly gazing on the silent deep?
Why bends her lovely form, as though 'twould dare
To meet the image deep reflected there?
Her long dishevelled tresses loosely flow,
Above the breast that heaves with hopeless woe:
Her shadowy form beneath the crystal water
Attracts her smile! — oh! Conrade's hapless daughter!
Oh! lost for ever! reason's meteor light
Has fled, and left distraction's cheerless night!
Yet, through that night, there shone one radiant star,
One ray of promised bliss, but distant far:
Nor other good could prompt on earth to stay —
Her Leof wronged — her Conrade passed away!
When that still flood, which now beneath her sleeps,
Roars to the blast that o'er its bosom sweeps;

When thunder howls, and vivid lightnings glare,
And billowy mountains foam aloft in air;
E'en then — when hideous waves in tumult roll,
E'en then — 'tis calmer than her troubled soul!
For life's serener passions dwell not there.

Afflicting even to pain is now the distress of the poor forsaken wanderer; and cold and worthless must that bosom be, that can refuse to share her sorrows; that can listen to her wild complainings, and self-condemning fears, without one throb of pity! — She complains that all have deserted her, that her father, Leof, and Edwin are all gone, and have left her to perish alone; a destitution which she trusts may, if she has been guilty of a fault, prove a sufficient atonement for its commission; and she then alludes to the circumstance which has wrecked her peace of mind; "they say I wronged him," — an accusation which introduces the recollection of her yet more beloved Edwin, and the apprehension that he has forgotten her, while, at the same time, memory suggests, that here she first beheld him struggling with the waves, a reminiscence which instantly brings on a pa-

roxysm of distraction, and she fancies she sees him overwhelmed and sinking in the ocean. From this vision of anguish she at length, awakens, to experience, however, only transient relief, only that partial renovation of intellectual day which seems but to show more effectually the horrors of her situation.

It is at this moment that a small vessel is seen nearing the cliff; on its deck stands Edwin, anticipating the pleasures of the approaching interview, and impatient to reach the shore. He perceives on the summit of the steep, a pale and shadowy form, and, immediately landing, scales its lofty height, and recognises in the seeming shade, his dear but lost Gonilda; alas! how changed from what she was — a flower withering and blasted by the storm, and cold as the rock to which she clung. — He clasps, her to his bursting heart, and calls in agony upon her name! she recollects, and blesses her beloved Edwin, and expires within his arms! and the poet concludes his beautiful but melancholy tale, with the following admirable lines, which breathe over the agitated spirits a pensive yet consolatory charm.

There is a sorrow, which the heart alone
That feels the rudest shock of fate has known;
There is a grief that wounded minds endure,
No fear can torture, and no hope can cure! —
The valley smiled — but Edwin's smiles were o'er;
The sun beamed bright — but beamed for *him* no more. —
A broken, blighted flower; awhile he grew,
To mourn the faded bliss that once he knew,
Alas! to know no more! his fate could give
No fear of death — no longing wish to live: —
No friend, though loved — no holy friar's prayer
Could calm his grief, or soothe his mute despair;
Nor convent's sacred rites could peace supply;
Nor hallowed bead — nor cross — nor rosary;
Alike availed his withered heart, forlorn,
The Christian's pity, or the Paynim's scorn. —
Nor long he breathed, unnumbered with the dead.
No father shrived him on his dying bed;
He shunned the world — and, in the lonely dell,
Died by the grave of her he loved so well! —
Beneath one turf they slept — and near the mound,
Was heard the billow's melancholy sound.
The passing seaman, when his skiff was near,
Mused on the spot, and shed the pensive tear;
There many a rustic Ceorle of the vale
Wept o'er their dust, and told their hapless tale;

E'en the stern *Dane* relaxed his brow of hate,
And mourned for Edwin's and Gonilda's fate.

Such is the poem which Mr. Bird has given to the public, and such his "first appearance in the character of an author." *

That the effort will secure him an honourable and a permanent station among the poets of his country, I have not the smallest doubt in asserting; nor will the reader, I conceive, after a due consideration of the copious analysis which has just met his eye, refuse to sanction the prediction.

So striking, indeed, have been the passages which I have adduced; so abundantly do they carry on their surface the very form and pressure of superior powers; so much of taste and feeling, of life and character, pervades their whole texture and composition, and so sustained is the impression of the incidents throughout, by the beauty and spirited harmony of the versification, that no person, I am persuaded, can

* Vide Preface to his Poems, p. vi.

withdraw from the perusal of the "Vale of Slaughden," without a wish to see such encouragement bestowed, as may lead to further productions from the same source.

No. XIX.

At tu sume animos, nec spes cadat anxia curis,
Nec tua concutiat decolor ossa metus.—
Nec dubites quandoque frui melioribus annis,
Atque iterum patrios posse videre lares.

MILTON.

But thou take courage! strive against despair!
Quake not with dread, nor nourish anxious care!—
Look forth, expecting happier times to come,
And to enjoy, once more, thy native home!

COWPER.

IF absence from home be felt, as I have described it in a preceding number, it would appear that a *return* to it must be accompanied with many of the most purely delightful sensations of which our nature is susceptible. That this is the result under certain circumstances, and where absence has not been productive of numerous changes, will readily be allowed.

But where, as is usually the case, in protracted exile from our native soil, vicissitude and decay have been at work, the pleasure to be derived from revisiting the place of our birth, or the scene of our earliest years, must ever be mingled with a large portion of melancholy and regret.

It is more especially in returning to the home of our infancy, that these mixed sensations are experienced. The lapse of time has effected so many alterations both in animate and inanimate nature, and these appear to us so manifestly for the worse; we have lost so many friends to whom we were attached, and in those who survive, age and infirmity have operated with such unsparing power; so altered is even the aspect of our once-loved halls and fields, that the wreck of association is at first painfully felt. This soon gives way, however, to feelings of a more sweet and pensive kind, and though still deeply and mournfully reflecting on the instability of human ties, we hasten to gather up the relics of our former existence, and with an exquisitely tender emotion we press the fragments to our heart, and bathe them with our starting tears.

The recollection, indeed, of pleasures once participated on the spot, with those who were endeared to us by the closest affinities of nature, and who are now mouldering in the grave, though it elicit tears of bitter and unavailing regret, is yet accompanied with so many soothing though faded images of that period of life when novelty and hope, when fancy and the gentler affections threw an unbroken charm over existence, that the result of these contrasted reminiscences is still an exquisite though melancholy gratification; and yet more welcome, if the contemplation of the past tend, as it frequently does, to absorb or mitigate the inquietude of the passing hour.

Of what tender and fascinating interest such a retrospect is susceptible, may be learnt from the Seventh Book of Mr. Polwhele's "Local Attachment," written on revisiting his paternal seat. Here, after a delightful record of his juvenile pursuits and pleasures, he thus pathetically recalls the features of a beloved father and sister:

But ah, my sire! how fleeting is the view
Of pleasures shar'd with thee! — E'en now I shed
Fresh tears; in fancy all my griefs renew;
And wring my little hands beside thy bed;
Press thy cold lips, and pillow up thy head!
Yet, by a sweet remembrance sooth'd, I tell
How with a placid smile thy spirit fled;
And on those charities delight to dwell
Which I ador'd in death, and lov'd in life so well!

And *she*, congenial mind! — she, too, is gone,
Whose cherub features yet the scene endear —
She, whom a brother's love with pride shall own,
As long as love shall heave the sigh sincere!
Thy lively voice yet vibrates on my ear,
While on thy favourite crocus' golden hue,
Thy lily's tender tint, I drop a tear;
While I again salute as life were new,
Thy garden's southern hedge, where peep'd the hare-bell blue.

Yes! where the lilacs flaunt their vagrant shade,
With thee I seem to haste, as once we hied,
To the trim spot, and wield my careless spade,
And plant thy roots, the sunny fence beside,
And prop thy hyacinths, thy tulips' pride;

Or listen to thy woodnotes clear and sweet;
And bid thy gentle red-breast there abide —
Poor cheerless bird! still fond thy form to meet,
Still hopping o'er each print that marks thy little feet!

'Twas there the blackbird built his early nest.
Plastering its neatly-fibred round with clay;
And, seeming in a narrow circuit blest,
Swell'd to the morning light his sprightly lay.
And there, while fleecy clouds sunk west away,
Thy own melodious robin pour'd her throat,
Nor ceas'd though all around were dusky grey!
E'en now, the melancholy warblings float —
I see thee tranc'd, as erst, by every pensive note!

When, however, our *return to home*, and especially if it be after a long and almost hopeless absence, is unaccompanied by these melancholy privations; when we find those whom we had left years ago, are still in health, and unchanged in their attachment, it is then that the purest and most heart-felt gratifications of which our nature is capable, become the lot of man. Such, we are taught to believe, were the feelings of Ulysses on regaining his native island, and

thus have they been painted to us in one of the most interesting of the Greek Epigrams, and which has suffered nothing from the elegant version in the Collection of Mr. Bland.

Hail, Ithaca, my lov'd paternal soil!
How, after years of travel, war, and toil,
How, after countless perils of the sea,
My heart, returning, fondly clings to thee!
Where I shall once more bless my father's age,
And smooth the last steps of his pilgrimage,
Again embrace my wife, again enjoy
The sweet endearments of my only boy.
Now, from my soul, I feel how strong the chain
That binds the passions to our native plain.
M.

This we may suppose to have been the exclamation of Ulysses on the first recognition of his beloved country; but for the raptures which awaited him in the embraces of his family, we must refer to Homer, who, in describing the

* Vide Bland's Collections from the Greek Anthology, p. 112.

events consequent on the return of his hero, has given us a picture of domestic love and tenderness unparalleled in the history of our species. Ulysses first discovers himself, by the command of Minerva, to his son; the goddess, for the purpose of this interview, having spread over his form the majesty and grace which had distinguished the vigour of his days, and clothed him in imperial purple. Telemachus, who had hitherto seen Ulysses only under the disguise of a poor and aged mendicant, surprised at the sudden alteration, addresses him as a God, and invokes his protection; a mistake which is thus nobly and eloquently corrected:

Τὸν δ' ἠμείβετ' ἔπειτα πολυτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς·
Οὔ τίς τοι θεος ειμι, τί μ' αθανάτοισιν ἐΐσκεις; &c.*

Few are my days (Ulysses made reply),
Nor I, alas! descendant of the sky.

* This noble line, which Plutarch has recommended as a suitable reply to the flattery of a sycophant, has been literally, and more emphatically translated by Cowper.

I am no God. Why deem'st thou me divine?

I am thy father.—O my son! my son!
That father, for whose sake thy days have run
One scene of woe; to endless cares consign'd,
And outrag'd by the wrongs of base mankind.
Then, rushing to his arms, he kiss'd his boy
With the strong raptures of a parent's joy.
Tears bathe his cheek, and tears the ground bedew;
He strain'd him close, as to his breast he grew.
"Ah me! (exclaims the prince with fond desire)
Thou art not — no, thou canst not be my sire.
Heaven such illusion only can impose,
By the false joy, to aggravate my woes.
Who but a god can change the general doom,
And give to wither'd age a youthful bloom?
Late, worn with years, in weeds obscene you trod;
Now, cloth'd in majesty, you move a god!"
"Forbear;" he cried, "for heaven reserve that name:
Give to thy father but a father's claim:
Other Ulysses shalt thou never see:
I am Ulysses; — I, my son, am he.
Twice ten sad years o'er earth and ocean tost,
'Tis given at length to view my native coast.
Pallas, unconquer'd maid, my frame surrounds
With grace divine; — her power admits no bounds:
She o'er my limbs old age and wrinkles shed!
Now strong as youth, magnificent I tread.

The gods, with ease, frail man depress or raise,
Exalt the lowly, or the proud debase."
He spoke and sat. The prince with transport flew;
Hung round his neck, while tears his cheek bedew:
Nor less the father pour'd a social flood!
They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.

Book xvi.

The incredulity of Penelope, who is still more hopeless than even her son had been of the return of Ulysses, is with yet greater difficulty removed. She disbelieves the assertions of Euryclea, doubts even the testimony of her own eyes, and conceives the suitors to have been destroyed by the arm of an avenging deity. When, however, she is at last convinced, by the detail which Ulysses gives of circumstances known only to herself and him, the tide of affection pours through her bosom with resistless energy.

Ως φάτο· τῆς δ' αὐτοῦ λύτο γουνατα και φίλον ἦτορ. 205.
ad
Δειρῆς δ' οὔπω πάμπαν ἀφίετο πηχεε λευκώ. 240

While yet he speaks; her powers of life decay,
She sickens, trembles, falls, and faints away:
At length recovering, to his arms she flew,
And strain'd him close, as to his breast she grew:
The tears pour down amain:—and, "Oh," she cries,
"Let not against thy spouse thine anger rise!
O vers'd in every turn of human art,
Forgive the weakness of a woman's heart!
The righteous powers, that mortal lots dispose,
Decree us to sustain a length of woes,
And from the flower of life, the bliss deny
To bloom together, fade away, and die.
O let me, let me not thine anger move,
That I forbore, thus, thus, to speak my love;
Thus in fond kisses, while the transport warms,
Pour out my soul, and die within thy arms!
I dreaded fraud! Men, faithless men, betray
Our easy faith, and make the sex their prey:
Against the fondness of my heart I strove
'Twas caution, oh my lord! not want of love:
Like me had Helen fear'd, with wanton charms
Ere the fair mischief set two worlds in arms,
Ere Greece rose dreadful in the avenging day,
Thus had she fear'd, she had not gone astray.
But Heaven, averse to Greece, in wrath decreed
That she should wander, and that Greece should
bleed:

Blind to the ills that from injustice flow,
She colour'd all our wretched lives with woe.
But why these sorrows when my lord arrives?
I yield, I yield! my own Ulysses lives!
The secrets of the bridal bed are known
To thee, to me, to Actoris alone
My father's present in the spousal hour,
The sole attendant on our genial bow'r.
Since what no eye has seen thy tongue reveal'd,
Hard and distrustful as I am, I yield.'

Touch'd to the soul, the king with rapture hears,
Hangs round her neck, and speaks his joy in tears.
As to the shipwreck'd mariner, the shores
Delightful rise, when angry Neptune roars;
Then, when the surge in thunder mounts the sky,
And gulf'd in crowds at once the sailors die;
If one more happy, while the tempest raves,
Out-lives the tumult of conflicting waves,
All pale, with ooze deform'd, he views the strand,
And plunging forth with transport grasps the land:
The ravish'd queen with equal rapture glows,
Clasps her lov'd lord, and to his bosom grows.

Book xxiii.

Forcibly as these passages appeal to the heart, as examples of *paternal* and *conjugal* affection, they are yet surpassed by those which paint the

filial piety of Ulysses, as he cautiously unfolds himself to his aged father. He finds the venerable old man at work in his garden hoeing the weeds about a plant, and he sheds tears at the sight of him.

Μερμήριξε δ' ἔπειτα κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατα θυμὸν, &c. 234.

Doubtful he stood, if instant to embrace
His aged limbs, to kiss his reverend face,
With eager transport to disclose the whole,
And pour at once the torrent of his soul.—
Not so: — his judgment takes the winding way
Of question distant, and of soft essay;
More gentle methods on weak age employs,
And moves the sorrows, to enhance the joys.
Book xxiv.

He addresses him, therefore, apprehensive of the effects of a too sudden disclosure on his enfeebled frame, as a perfect stranger, enquiring, as if just landed, whether he has really arrived at Ithaca, and whether Ulysses, whom he had formerly entertained beneath his roof, and of whom he was now in search, were yet living, and an inhabitant of the island. Laertes

tells him, weeping, that the guest for whom he is so kindly interested is no more, and he then eagerly demands what time has elapsed since their interview: —

Ἀλλ'. ἄγε μοι τόδε εἰπὲ, καὶ ἀτρεκέως κατάλεξον, 286
ad
Τίς; πόθεν εἶς ἀνδρῶν; πόθι τοι πόλις, ἠδὲ τοκῆες; 297

'But tell me, stranger, be the truth confess'd,
What years have circled since thou saw'st that guest?
That hapless guest, alas! for ever gone!
(Wretch that he was: and that I am!) my son!
If ever man to misery was born,
'Twas his to suffer, and 'tis mine to mourn!
Far from his friends, and from his native reign,
He lies, a prey to monsters of the main;
Or savage beasts his mangled reliques tear,
Or screaming vultures scatter through the air:
Nor could his mother funeral unguents shed;
Nor wail'd his father o'er th' untimely dead;
Nor his sad consort, on the mournful bier,
Seal'd his cold eyes, or dropp'd a tender tear!
But tell me, who thou art? and what thy race?
Thy town, thy parents, and thy native place?'

The apparent stranger replies by a feigned narrative of his life, concluding with the statement that five years had passed since their separation, and that as Ulysses had left him under favourable auguries, he had been in hopes of exchanging the rites of friendship with him on his native shore.

Ως φάτο· τὸν δ' ἄχεος νεφέλη ἐκάλυψε μέλαινα· 314
ad
Ἀλλ' ἴσχεο κλαυθμοῖο, γοοιο τε δακρυοεντος. 322

Quick through the father's heart these accents ran;
Grief seiz'd at once, and wrapt up all the man:
Deep from his soul he sigh'd, and sorrowing spread
A cloud of ashes on his hoary head.
Trembling with agonies of strong delight
Stood the great son; heart-wounded with the sight:
He ran, he seiz'd him with a strict embrace, —
With thousand kisses wander'd o'er his face,
'I, I am he; — O father, rise! — behold
Thy son, with twenty winters now grown old;
Thy son, — so long desir'd, so long detain'd, —
Restor'd, and breathing in his native land:
These floods of sorrow, oh, my sire, restrain!'

Book xxiv.

Laertes, like Telemachus and Penelope, is at first incredulous; he demands some tokens of his identity, and when these are given,

. . . . αὐτοῦ λύτο γούνατα καὶ φίλον ἦτορ. &c. 344

. . . . .

Smit with the signs which all his doubts explain,
His heart within him melts; his knees sustain
Their feeble weight no more; his arms alone
Support him, round the lov'd Ulysses thrown:
He faints, he sinks, with mighty joys oppress'd:
Ulysses clasps him to his eager breast.

It were in vain to look elsewhere for a scene of such complete re-union of domestic felicity after long absence from home, as is here displayed, except we refer to the Holy Scriptures, where, with the same happy simplicity and pathos, and often nearly in the same terms with the original Greek, are described Joseph's interview with Jacob, and his discovery to his brethren; recognitions which have called forth the tears of thousands through every subsequent age.

But, even independent of the gratifications which result from a restoration to dear and long-

lost kindred, home has many attractions for the returning exile of a soothing and delightful nature. How does the tired wanderer rejoice, when, after innumerable perils and fatigues, he once more sees the smoke curling from his well-remembered roof, or presses his accustomed bed. Such were the transports of Catullus, when returning disappointed from Bithynia, whither he had accompanied the prætor Memmius, he again caught a view of his beloved villa rising from the beautiful peninsula of Sirmio.

Peninsularum, Sirmio, insularumque
Ocelle, quascunque in liquentibus stagnis,
Marique vasto fert uterque Neptunus;
Quàm te libenter, quámque lætus inviso,
Vix mî ipse credens Thyniam, atque Bithynos
Liquisse campos, et videre te in tuto.
O quid solutis est beatius curis!
Cùm mens onus reponit, ac peregrino
Labore fessi, venimus larem ad nostrum,
Desideratóque acquiescimus lecto.
Hoc est, quod unum est pro laboribus tantis.
Salve, ô venusta Sirmio, atque hero gaude;

Gaudete, vósque Lydiæ lacus undæ;
Ridete quidquid est domi cachinnorum.

Of the numerous translations which have been given of this lovely little poem, which I have been induced to copy entire, not one has, in my opinion, so well expressed the tender enthusiasm of the original, as the following attempt by Mr. Leigh Hunt.

O best of all the scatter'd lands, that break
From spreading sea or hill — retiring lake,
How happy do I drop within thy breast!
With what a sigh of full, contented rest!
Scarce trusting, that my vagrant toil is o'er,
And that these eyes behold thee safe once more.
Is aught so blest as such a loose from care,
When the soul's load rests with us in the chair,
When we return from pilgrimage, and spread
The loosen'd limbs o'er all the well-known bed?
This of itself repays the grinding toil,
And gives to failing knees the fresh'ning oil.
Hail, lovely Sirmio! meet thy master's smiles;
And laugh, thou sparkling lake, thro' all thine isles;
Laugh, every social spot; your master's come;
Laugh, every dimple on the cheek of home!

The same grateful and heart-soothing sensations, the effect of returning to our native hearth, have been traced with a pencil equally sweet and touching, in the "Local Attachment" of Mr. Polwhele, and with a reference in the closing stanza of the passage, to the pathetic *carmen* of Catullus:

Lo, as he hails his own congenial soil,
What joys the way-worn traveller's bosom fill,
When, after many a danger, many a toil,
He seeks the covert of his native hill!
Sudden he feels a dear delicious thrill
At the first gleaming of his distant trees;
And hastens to the clump that shades the mill;
And deems it an illusion, as he sees
His oak from childhood lov'd, yet waving to the breeze.

With quivering hand he opes his lighten'd door,
Eyes, in his pannell'd hall, each welcome chair;
Pensive surveys the windows o'er and o'er,
That all his waken'd feelings seem to share!
(Sweet recompense for long, long years of care!)

And many a silent tear 'tis to shed
As, tremulous for joy his steps repair
To his old chamber, where his weary head
May press secure at last, his own accustom'd bed.

Thus pleasant to his fond poetic soul
Catullus saw once more the lucid tide
Around the green banks of his Sirmio roll,
And hail'd his tranquil home now dim-descried;
Happy at length, his labors laid aside,
Amid his oliv'd island to repose;
" Here, on my own old couch (the master cried)
" Shall I dismiss a train of wakeful woes;
" Here, in delicious sleep, my heavy eyelids close."

Even under the pressure of advanced age, when the head has been blanched by the frosts of many winters, and when health and pleasure are no more, even then, returning to the roof of happier years, to the few sympathies and associations which await us on the spot where we once were blessed with dearer and with closer ties, is still, though united with many pensive recollections, a gratification of no trivial kind; for, in fact, to breathe our last at home is then

the only *merely earthly* consolation which is left us.

With the love of home, therefore, whether under actual enjoyment, during a temporary absence, or when returning to it, are connected so many of the purest pleasures, and best virtues of our common nature, that in proportion, we may affirm, as it shall be valued or cherished, will the individual be happy in himself, and useful to others. It is, indeed, the most permanent solace and comfort in every period of life: powerfully is this felt to be the case in youth and old age; but in the vigour of our days, when the sterner passions prevail, when the man is too often absorbed in the pursuit of wealth and power, the modest virtues of domestic life are apt to be slighted and forgotten; and as, if ever the heart become totally estranged to the simple pleasures which spring from a love of home and its endearing duties, there must the wreck of happiness be complete, it is in the highest degree incumbent on those who are passing this dangerous stage of our pilgrimage, to foster and cherish with peculiar avidity, that

spirit of local attachment which formed the charm and shield of their earlier years, and without which, as including all the ties and affections of love and affinity, neither peace, nor morality, nor religion, can exist.

As a somewhat appropriate termination of these lucubrations on the *Love of Home*, I shall venture to subjoin two sonnets, selected from a number which have been written on the various occurrences of social and domestic life.

SONNET.

To Mrs. D****.

To me most dear hath been the vesper hour
When sinks the sun amid his halls of rest,
When Fancy loves to trace the golden west,
And build amid his clouds her fairy bower:
How passing sweet on yonder ivy'd tower
His farewell smile in tranquil beauty drest,
Now purpling mild yon mountain's emerald crest,
Now sinking soft where yon blue waters pour!

So, in the blaze of life my hope hath been,
Its eve of parting should resemble this;
Its passions, ardours, sorrows, hush'd serene
On the soft bosom of domestic bliss:
For such calm close of life's tumultuous day,
To Heaven and Thee, this grateful strain I pay!

SONNET.

To Mrs, D****.

As when at eve, o'er wintry realms supreme,
Scowls the dark tempest in his angry flight,
Whilst loud the spirit of the mountain stream
Yells with wild joy, and fills the ear of night,
If on the way-worn pilgrim sudden gleam
The bright star burning in her bower of light,
How cheers his soul beneath her modest beam,
What songs of seraphs lull his weary sprite!

So, mid the storms that cloud life's evening sky,
Still hath it been my envied lot to prove,
As soothers skill'd to bid disaster fly
Vesper's soft light, and music's tones above,
The light that trembles in thy melting eye,
The tones that linger on thy lip of love.

No. XX.

Illumining the vaulted roof,
A thousand torches flam'd aloof:
From massy cups, with golden gleam
Sparkled the "rubied nectar's" stream:
To grace the gorgeous festival,
Along the lofty-window'd hall,
The storied tapestry was hung:
With minstrelsy the rafters rung
Of harps, that with reflected light
From the proud gallery glitter'd bright:
While gifted bards, a rival throng, —
To crown the banquet's "genial" close,
Themes of "love" and glory chose.

WARTON.

THE shades of night had fallen deep around the towers of Kirton Priory, when Sir Gregory Bellerdiston, accompanied by his children, and by Sir Philip, and his nephew, re-entered the mansion of his fathers, virtually, though not ostensibly, once more its honoured lord.

With a delicacy and attention characteristic of the feelings of Colonel Burton and his amiable daughter, they had, with the assistance of Mr. Melville, collected as many of Sir Gregory's old and faithful servants as could be reinstated without exciting suspicion; and these, among whom were Alan and the husband of Margaret, stood ready in the Great Hall to welcome the return of their beloved master with tears of gratitude and joy. What were the sensations of the aged Baronet, what those which thrilled through the breasts of Edward and of Jane, as they beheld this tribute of affection, and received the heart-felt congratulations of their generous friends, may be more easily conceived than described. Jane hid her emotion on the bosom of Emily; Henry, himself deeply agitated, supported his father; whilst Sir Philip Waldgrave, shaking his brother soldier by the hand, declared, that of all the good deeds he had ever witnessed, he most envied that of which the Colonel was now the origin and agent.

Anxious that Sir Gregory, as far as was consistent with the character he had himself to support, should feel as much as possible in his

former sphere, the Colonel had previously directed, upon information derived from Mr. Melville, that the apartments which the Baronet and his family had been in the habit of occupying, should be exclusively appropriated to their use. When, therefore, after having spent the evening with that cheerfulness and sense of enjoyment to which preceding misfortune gives so high a relish, they were about to separate for the night, Colonel Burton, addressing Sir Gregory, expressed his hopes that he would consider the wing of the Priory they were then in, which, as including the library and oratory, had been, he understood, his favourite portion of the building, might be still regarded as peculiarly devoted to his accommodation, and totally independent of that nominal authority with which, from prudential motives, they had thought it necessary for a time to invest himself; adding, as he turned to Miss Bellerdiston, that he hoped she would find her suite of apartments had lost little either of their beauty or attraction from the taste and occupation of his daughter. "I must instantly break in upon your arrangements, Colonel," replied Jane, "so far as to dis-

claim, for myself at least, all exclusive possession; for, unless my dear Emily, to whom I am so much indebted, be my constant companion, and enjoy a right equivalent to my own, I shall be robbed, I do assure you, of all the gratification I had so fondly anticipated. I shall, therefore, without further ceremony, commence my operations by carrying her off for the night; convinced, my dear Sir, that you cannot wish to intercept a plan so essential to the happiness of both."

The Colonel had scarcely time to give an assenting bow, ere the ladies, smiling archly, as they bade their friends a good night, had disappeared; and Sir Gregory, rising as they left the room, declared, that, following his daughter's example, he must also protest against any such system of appropriation, at least so far as to avow, that if he acceded to the Colonel's wishes in considering the oratory and the apartment they were now in, as in some degree more peculiarly set apart for his use, he must positively decline any similar privilege with respect to the library; adding, that, in reference to it, he felt precisely what Jane had so well expressed

with regard to Miss Burton's society, that without a full participation in the use of the collection on the part of so highly competent a bibliographer as was Colonel Burton, he should lose much enjoyment and more information. "Let me also be allowed to propose," he continued, "what has hitherto been, from time immemorial, the social custom in Kirton priory, that we assemble in this room to our morning and evening meal. During the interim I will claim the privilege you have offered; but you will excuse me, I am persuaded, Colonel, if I further add, that it was our usual practice after supper, to visit the adjoining oratory, and there, I trust, notwithstanding any difference of opinion which these unhappy times may have produced, we shall still be able to unite in imploring that aid, without which, vain are the hopes of man."

"Nothing, I can assure you, my dear Sir," replied the Colonel, "will afford me higher comfort and consolation, than joining you in such a rite; and I must say, that I feel greatly obliged by the frankness of your communication, — happy to conform, not only to this important duty, but, as far as lies in my power, to every former re-

gulation of the Priory. The sudden decision of these young ladies, however, has, I confess, somewhat broken in upon my arrangements, and may probably have deprived you, Sir Gregory, of the apartment to which you have been accustomed; but as the suite of chambers on the left of the upper quadrangle is in perfect readiness to receive both myself and my friends, I beg you will not hesitate in making your election."

Thus separated for the night, the now united families of the Burtons and Bellerdistons. Their junction had taken place at a period, and under circumstances, which still called for great prudence and circumspection, and which necessarily subjected them to much privacy and numerous restrictions. But the character and government of the Protector Richard were such as not to threaten them with any very serious molestation, provided the return of Sir Gregory and his family could be screened from general notoriety. The name of Colonel Burton, as the ostensible lord of the Kirton estates, was of itself a powerful protection; and though the presence of Sir Gregory soon became more than matter

of mere conjecture in the immediate neighbourhood of the Priory, yet with such love and veneration was the memory of his good deeds cherished in their hearts, that he who had dared to turn informer, would in all probability, have been torn in pieces. The autumn and the winter, therefore, passed undisturbed; and though the Colonel had it not in his power, from the peculiar situation of his friends, to commence the plan of munificent hospitality which he had meditated, yet were the attractions of society, in all their varied force and fascination, more intensely felt, perhaps, within the now limited circle of Kirton Priory, than if its gates had stood open to receive the gay and wealthy of its neighbourhood.

That ardent attachment to books and antiquarian lore which burnt so brightly in the bosoms of Sir Gregory and Colonel Burton, formed a bond of union which no discrepancy of opinion on any other subject had power to dissever. Many were the winter evenings which rolled lightly over their heads, as they sat by the blazing hearth-stone in the library of Kirton Priory, discussing the various merits and

comparative value of the earlier editions of their favourite authors. The Colonel's own collection, equally precious for the rarity and beauty of its volumes, and the recondite nature of its stores, had arrived at Kirton shortly after the junction of the two families, and the inspection and arrangement of its numerous gems, its vellum folios and quartos, highly embossed, and rough with golden knobs and silver clasps, afforded fresh fuel to the bibliographical enthusiasm of Sir Gregory. If his own library was peculiarly rich in the department of Romances, Chronicles, Rural Pastimes, and Facetiæ, the Colonel's was not less singularly so in all that related to Occult Science and Superhuman Agency. Both were wealthy in classic lore, and the appreciation of their favourite studies, the comparative splendour and condition of their respective copies, or the superior size or integrity of their frequently occurring duplicates, furnished a never-failing source of amusement, in which Mr. Melville, who was an almost daily visitor at the Priory, and Sir Philip Waldgrave, would often join, especially when the classes of Theology and History formed the subject of debate.

Varied and delightful as these occupations proved to the elder branches of the Kirton family, superseding in a great measure, as in-door amusements, those games of skill or chance, with which the hall of the baron and country-gentleman too often abounded, of a still more fascinating description were the resources which fancy and affection opened to the younger portion of the circle. That fairy and romantic tinting which love, in noble and exalted minds, so often diffuses over the early scenes of life, was theirs; and no combination of circumstances seemed better adapted to cherish and prolong the scene of enchantment, than was that which surrounded them at Kirton Priory. It is true, they were, with the exception of the Melville's, secluded from any intercourse with the neighbourhood, yet possessing, within their own noble mansion, friends propitious to their wishes, and anxious for their happiness, encircled by gardens and plantations of exquisite beauty, and of the amplest magnitude; gifted to communicate and enjoy every varied charm that music, poetry, and painting could supply, and, above all, animated by that ennobling passion whose con-

stant object is to please, time fled by with rapture on his wings; and, whether the evenings of autumn or the nights of winter were devoted to recreation or to study, each hour alike added strength to their affections, and stability to their hopes. The attachment, indeed, of Henry for Jane had subsisted for some months, whilst that between Edward and Emily was but just beginning to disclose itself; but the numerous opportunities which daily occurred of ascertaining the mutual tempers and inclinations of the parties, soon confirmed the one, and unfolded the other; and, ere the winter had elapsed, it was well understood at the Priory, that nothing but the precarious situation of the times was allowed to postpone this double union of the Burtons and Bellerdistons.

Nor was this the only connection which was likely to spring from the limited society at Kirton; the amiable manners and intellectual accomplishments of Mrs. Aston, who, together with her children, very frequently spent a week at the Priory, had made a strong impression on the heart of Sir Philip Waldgrave, and he waited but that change in public measures

which might restore him to his country and his friends, in order to make a formal declaration of his sentiments.

Long and anxious, therefore, were the looks which the otherwise happy inhabitants of Kirton Priory directed towards the seat of government. It appeared, indeed, to Colonel Burton and his friends, that the mild and indecisive character of the new Protector was ill adapted to struggle with the factions which assailed him on every side; and they beheld with dismay the rapid progress of the republican party, until the deposition of Richard in the Spring of 1659, and the consequent ascendancy of the Rump Parliament, seemed to extinguish for them all hope of better times. The lapse of a few months, however, clearly proved that these demagogues had themselves much to fear from the ambitious projects of the army; and the vaccillation which soon took place between the contending powers, the dispersion of the Rump by a Military Committee of Safety in October, and its re-assemblage in December following, unveiled to all the weakness of both sides, and re-inspired confidence in the breasts of those who, alike dread-

ing the domination of either faction, looked only for stability and order in a somewhat modified resumption of the ancient form of government. Of this number was Colonel Burton, who had long maintained a correspondence, both in England and Scotland, with the friends of constitutional monarchy.

Things were thus situated, when one morning, towards the middle of January, 1660, just as the family were separating after breakfast, the sounds of military music were distinctly heard on the breeze, as it swept along the aged avenue of oaks. Surprise sate upon the features of all, save those of Colonel Burton, who immediately dissipated their alarm by stating, that, from letters which he had received some weeks ago from Dalkeith, he had no doubt but that he was about to be honoured with a visit from General Monk, who had informed him that he should enter England at the head of his forces on the opening of the new year, and wished much for an hour's conference with him on his march towards the capital. As to what were the precise objects of his expedition, or what was the line of politics he meant to pursue,

he was, at present, ignorant; for, although few men had been more intimate with George Monk than himself, yet such was the reserve of his disposition, that it was difficult, especially on matters of state policy, to penetrate beyond the bare surface of his designs. Under these circumstances, he thought it would be prudent that no one but himself should appear; a piece of advice which was gladly followed by the rest of the party, who proposed ascending one of the central turrets of the Priory, where, screened themselves from observation, they might view the military array of the General in perfect security.

Scarcely had they reached their elevated station, when the clang of the trumpets and kettle-drums became distinctly audible, and they soon peceived files of cavalry entering the further end of the avenue, their arms glancing to the winter sun, as by frequent fits it flashed upon them through openings in the now leafless trees. Nor was this the only exciting part of the spectacle; for commanding, as they did, a vast range of country, they could very clearly trace the march of the whole expedition, as it pursued

for some miles the windings of the great road, retiring from, or starting forward to the eye, according to the inequalities of the ground, and the intervention of numerous projecting points. The force consisted of near five thousand men, and, being well-appointed and supported by a respectable body of horse, presented, even at that distance, a most imposing object to the imagination. The chief interest, however, was necessarily fixed upon the small detachment now about to enter the western gates of the Priory, and which, as it drew nearer, absorbed attention by the splendour and completeness of its equipment, both as to men and horses. Monk, mounted on a cream-coloured charger, led the van, and passing the great portal, ranged his squadron right and left in files round the great quadrangle. Colonel Burton stood ready at the entrance of the hall to receive and welcome him, and having previously given orders to his servants to supply the men liberally with the best ale the cellars afforded, conducted the General and his officers, amid a flourish of trumpets, to the banqueting room, where, having partaken of what refreshment the

shortness of the notice would admit of being placed before them, the Colonel and his friend retired, for a short time, to the library; and in little more than two hours from the announcement of their approach, the whole troop were on their route to rejoin the main body of the army.

It had been with mingled sensations of apprehension and awe, that Sir Gregory and the group around him, looked down upon the entrance of the republican chief beneath the towers of Kirton Priory. With the great respectability of his character, and with the mildness and moderation which had almost invariably distinguished his measures in the North, they were well acquainted; but, at the same time, while his popularity was nearly universal, and the whole country looked up to him as the decider of their fate, there hung a mystery about his real views and intentions which gave much inquietude to all reflecting minds; for it was evident, that if in the present critical situation of affairs, the ambition of attaining sovereign power lurked within his breast, he had a fairer prospect of realising his wishes than perhaps

any other individual in the nation. And, as not only in a political point of view, but in all that concerned their private interests and affections, the welfare of the present party very greatly depended on the restoration of the ancient monarchy, so with proportionate anxiety were they solicitous to ascertain the sentiments of him who held as it were the destiny of their country in his hand.

No sooner, therefore, had the General withdrawn his forces beyond the walls of the Priory, than they hastened to enquire the issue of the conference. What Colonel Burton had to communicate, however, was scanty, and unsatisfactory, and amounted to little more than this;—that his friend had determined to restore the independence of parliament, while, at the same time, he endeavoured to maintain his popularity with the army; objects of difficult execution, considering the small force which he at present commanded. Yet, if any man could achieve this, he was persuaded Monk, from the caution and profundity of his character, was the individual; but of his ulterior views he could as yet form no opinion than what might be drawn.

from the express object of his visit, which was to solicit his, the Colonel's, immediate *personal* assistance in town, both in council and in the field. Now, as his sentiments and wishes were pretty well known to the General, and he had only yielded to his request under the implied condition that he should be at liberty to retire whenever they should essentially differ in politics, he could not avoid cherishing the idea that a return to the ancient regime, under some modification or other, was within the contemplation of his friend. "Let us, therefore, look forward," he added, "with cheerfulness and hope; for, though it is my intention to leave you in a few days, in order to join the army at Leicester, yet I have no doubt, that either you, Henry, or your sister, will soon hear from me of events alike conducive to the peace and happiness of us all."

Accordingly, in less than a week, the Colonel, accompanied by his faithful servant Robert, commenced his somewhat perilous expedition, quitting the Priory amidst the prayers and wishes of its inhabitants, and with a smiling assurance to Sir Gregory, as he shook him cor-

dially by the hand, that at their next interview, he would present him with a reversal of his act of attainder and banishment.

How eager and anxious was the expectation of each member of this secluded group for the promised intelligence, it is scarcely necessary to say. At length information was received from the Colonel, of the entrance of Monk and himself into London on the 3d of February, but under circumstances of a somewhat doubtful hue. This was soon followed by the perplexing statement of the re-assembly of the Presbyterian parliament of 1648. Its self-dissolution, however, in the subsequent March, and the meeting of a new parliament in April, accompanied as they were by the comments and explanations of the Colonel, set every heart at ease, and fully prepared his friends for the joyful news which he shortly afterwards sent down by express, of the proclamation of the king in his own capital, on the 8th of May.* Intelligence which was

* As this portion of our narrative is intimately connected with several of the historical events of the years 1659 and 1660, it may probably be satisfactory to the reader to have the more prominent of these concentrated into one point of view.

coupled with a request, that the whole party would, as soon as possible, set off for the metro-

1. Richard deposed April 22d, 1659.
2. Rump Parliament assembled May 8th, 1659.
3. The Army's Committee of Safety formed October 26th, 1659, and the Rump Parliament dispersed.
4. Rump Parliament restored December 26th, 1659.
5. Monk enters England January 2d, 1660.
6. Monk reaches Leicester January 22d, 1660.
7. Monk enters London February 3d, 1660.
8. Monk restores the Presbyterian Parliament of 1648, February 21st, 1660.
9. Parliament dissolves itself March 17th, 1660.
10. New Parliament meets April 25th, 1660.
11. The King proclaimed in London May 8th, 1660.
12. The King arrives at Whitehall May 29th, 1660.

This last event is recorded by Mr. Evelyn, in his Diary; in the following lively and impressive manner. "29 May 1660. This day his Majr *Charles the Second* came to *London*, after a sad and long exile and calamitous suffering both of the King and Church, being 17 yeares. This was also his birth-day, and with a triumph of 20,000 horse and foote, brandishing their swords and shouting with inexpressible joy; the wayes strew'd with flowers, the bells ringing, the streetes hung with tapistry, fountaines running with wine; the Maior, Aldermen, and all the Companies in their liveries, chaines of gold, and banners; Lords and Nobles clad in cloth of silver, gold, and velvet, the windowes and balconies all set with ladies; trumpets, music, myriads of people flocking even so far as from *Rochester*, so as they were seven houres in passing the city, even from two in y^e^ afternoon till nine at night.

"I stood in the *Strand* and beheld it, and bless'd God. All this was done without one drop of bloud shed, and by that very army which rebell'd against him; but it was y^e^ Lord's doing, for such a restauration was never mention'd in any history

polis, as he wished them, on every account, to be present on the arrival of His Majesty, an an event which was then expected to take place in a fortnight or three weeks.

As concealment was now no longer necessary to Sir Gregory Bellerdiston and his family, preparations were openly made for their journey, and they reached London in time to witness the unbounded raptures with which their beloved monarch was hailed. It is almost superfluous to add, that Colonel Burton, as the co-operating friend of General Monk was most graciously received, and that the representations which he made to his sovereign of the fate and fortunes of the Bellerdistons, were listened to with interest; for Charles was well acquainted with the loyalty of that ancient house, and had frequently heard of the sufferings which they had undergone in support of his father's cause. He also expressed himself highly indebted to the exertions of Sir Philip Waldgrave, and requested the Colonel would bring him and Sir Gregory to Whitehall the following day.

---

ancient or modern, since the returne of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; nor so joyful a day and so bright ever seene in this nation, this hapning when to expect or effect it was past all human policy." Memoirs, vol. i. p. 109.

The consequences of this interview were the immediate restitution to Sir Gregory of his property and privileges, accompanied by additional grants, and the entailment of estates of considerable value on Colonel Burton and his heirs; favours which were rendered greatly more estimable by the gracious and affable manner in which they were bestowed. Nor were these the only marks of munificence and good will which the monarch, mindful of past services, was desirous of conferring; for, having understood from Colonel Burton that a double union was about to take place between the two families he signified his intention of being present at the ceremony; telling Sir Gregory, that, as he purposed, in the course of another month, making a progress through the North, he would take Kirton Priory in his way; and, provided the young ladies were then inclined to change their situation, they should be received at the altar as the gift of their king.

An honour so great and unexpected was received on the part of Sir Gregory and the Colonel with that silent gratitude and joy, and that willing homage of the knee, which best

bespoke their deep sense of the almost unexampled kindness and condescension of their sovereign.

It was now necessary that Sir Gregory should return to the seat of his ancestors, not only with the view of resuming possession of the Priory estates, but in order to superintend the preparations requisite for the royal visit. The whole party, therefore, including Colonel Burton and Sir Philip, left London in high spirits, and animated with the brightest hopes of the future. They were welcomed at Kirton with every demonstration of unfeigned joy; and the entire neighbourhood soon poured in to congratulate Sir Gregory on the happy revolution which had taken place in his circumstances. Busily, indeed, was the Baronet engaged in calling around him his widely dispersed household; but, aided by the information of the few old domestics who had remained in the village, and re-inforced by the establishment of the Colonel, he speedily saw the Priory re-assuming its former hospitable appearance, when fourscore servants were not found too numerous for the various duties which awaited them. Mr. Melville also,

who had been reinstated in his preferment, and who was then resident with his family at the Priory, gave much assistance to Sir Gregory and his friends, in issuing and forwarding the multitude of directions requisite for the approaching ceremonial.

Of a complexion very different from these were the preparations demanded, and the solicitudes felt, on the part of Emily and Jane, who, though little under the dominion of vanity, and no slaves to the tyranny of dress, thought it due to the very singular honour which was about to be vouchsafed them, to assume a splendour in their attire in some degree proportioned to the magnitude of the occasion. Much, however, as Edward and Henry were attached to their sovereign, and sensible of the high distinction he had promised to confer, they could scarcely witness the anxiety and apprehensive timidity which agitated the bosoms of these lovely girls, during a period so provokingly long, without in some degree regretting the chivalric courtesy of the monarch; and great, therefore, was their satisfaction, when an express from St. James's an-

nounced, that on that day week they would be honoured with the presence of their king. It was stated, that His Majesty would arrive at the Priory about ten o'clock, would dine and sleep there, and pursue his route in the cool of the ensuing morning, requesting, at the same time, that Sir Gregory would dispense as much as possible with all ceremony, and receive His Majesty as a private gentleman.

To do this, however, was found to be utterly impossible; for though only a few families of the first distinction in the county had been invited to meet their sovereign, the secret had, by some means or other, transpired, and Sir Gregory, whose hospitality on this occasion knew no limits, soon discovered, and without regret, that either within or without the Priory he must find accommodation for some thousands.

It was one of the loveliest mornings of the season, when Sir Gregory and his friends, forming a cavalcade of some length, assembled in the park of Kirton Priory; whence, in due order, they immediately proceeded to meet the royal visitor. The whole neighbourhood, either

on horseback or on foot, stood ready to accompany them; and when, after half an hour's ride, the carriage of the monarch was seen approaching, the shout of gratulation which the multitude sent up, seemed to electrify every heart, and to fill every bosom with enthusiasm.

The tears started to the eyes of Charles as he beheld the rapturous loyalty of his people; for, however lately accustomed to the acclamations of a crowded metropolis, there was something in the scene before him which pressed upon the heart with sensations of a still more solemn and impressive cast. Not only was the beautiful valley, which he was traversing, filled on both sides of its clear stream with rejoicing groups, but all the neighbouring heights and crags, lofty and picturesque in their forms, were covered with thousands, whose voices of acclaim and welcome, reverberated from rock to rock, broke upon the ear in intonations of the most awful sublimity.

Meanwhile, Sir Gregory Bellerdiston and his friends, having saluted the monarch, separated into two companies, preceding and following his carriage, until, at the entrance of the avenue

of oaks, the former, accompanied by Sir Philip and the Colonel, riding forward, stood ready, uncovered at the great portal of the Priory, to welcome and receive their king.

They conducted him, amid the music of numerous skilful and elegantly dressed minstrels of both sexes, to the upper end of the hall; where, seated beneath a canopy prepared for the occasion, all who had pretensions to the honour were presented and received with that winning affability so peculiarly characteristic of this prince. He then descended to the saloon, or withdrawing-room, where Mrs. Aston, the brides and bridemaids, and a select party of ladies, awaited his arrival. Here, animated by an unexpected burst of beauty, the gay and gallant Charles soon banished from every breast the chilling recollections of regal rank, and the monarch became speedily lost in the elegant and accomplished cavalier.

After a slight refection, which had been tastefully arranged in the library, His Majesty, leading Jane and Emily in each hand, and followed by their female friends, the two bridegrooms and their party, was ushered by Sir

Gregory and Colonel Burton into the oratory, where Mr. Melville stood ready to conduct them to the altar. In the mean time, as the bridal group was necessarily limited to a chosen few, the chapel had been gradually filling with all the principal families in the neighbourhood, who, having been invited to dinner, were admitted, and preceded to their seats by gentlemen belonging to Sir Gregory's establishment.

Every eye had been now sometime fixed upon the beautiful screen of the altar, when, at length, one of the Gothic arches receding, the monarch, supported by the two lovely brides, stood before them. The effect was such as nearly to overpower the congregation, the greater part of which, had not the hallowed nature of the structure they were in repressed such expression of their feelings, would have burst into a shout of gratulation. As it was, tears of transport rolled down their cheeks as they rose to the entrance of their sovereign, whose form, graceful and full of dignity, seemed presented to their eager gaze by beings of more than earthly beauty. So lovely, indeed, so fasci-

nating were the figures of Jane and Emily, that the association appeared scarcely to be an illusory one. They were robed in satin of the most dazzling whiteness, interspersed with flowers of silver; their hair hung unrestrained over their shoulders, but crossed in front by wreaths of pearls; yet it was not to the magic of art, but of nature, that the charm was due; it was the sylphoid lightness of the form, the liquid lustre of the eye, the ethereal tincture of the cheek, that breathed of higher worlds. This colouring of the picture, however, could be but momentary, nor was the interest perhaps less exciting, when the feelings and passions of humanity became the next instant blended with the scene, when the manly forms of Henry and Edward, the prominent figures of the opposite group, were seen anxiously bending forward to receive their destined brides.

In the centre, though somewhat receding, with that mild and devotional, yet penetrating cast of countenance which gave such a peculiar interest to his person and manner, stood the venerable chaplain, supported by the two baronets, Colonel Burton, and Mrs. Aston,

forming with the groups just mentioned, and their respective suites, a spectacle equally novel and imposing. A stillness the most profound accompanied the recitation of the services; and when the sovereign stepped forward, in the first instance, to bestow the accomplished Jane, and subsequently the not less lovely, though more timid Emily, the enthusiasm arising from this proof of condescending goodness, was with difficulty restrained within the limits due to the sanctity of the occasion.

In the meantime, the country round had been gathering to the festival; and in about two hours after the ceremonies of the chapel had been closed, the various parties sat down to partake of the munificent hospitality of Sir Gregory Bellerdiston.

Beneath a gorgeous canopy of crimson velvet, which graced the upper end of the first table in the great banquetting-room, presided the monarch, with the two lovely brides on his right and left; and at the bottom sat Sir Philip Waldgrave. At the head of the second table Sir Gregory himself officiated, supported at its lower extremity by Colonel Burton. It was in

this room, therefore, that, together with the king's suite, consisting of two noblemen and some general officers, were assembled the beauty, the fashion, and the rank of the neighbourhood and adjacent counties, exhibiting a rich display of all that wealth and taste could accumulate.

In the hall were spread three tables, at the first of which was placed Sir Gregory's steward; at the second his comptroller of the household, and at the third his secretary, accompanied by numerous gentlemen of small independent fortune, and by substantial yeomen; the former sitting above, and the latter below, the Salt, according to their respective estimation in the neighbourhood.

Two tables, the weather being remarkably fine for the purpose, were set in the great court or quadrangle; the first regulated by the steward, was occupied with the higher officers of the household, namely, the purveyors of the Priory, the ushers of the hall, the gentlemen of the chapel, the head-keepers of the park, the master-groom of the stables, the master of the hounds, the master of the fish-ponds, the

master-falconer, &c. &c., together with the pages and upper servants of the visitors; the second, under the conduct of the clerk of the kitchen, and of much greater extent, was filled with footmen, grooms, and other menial servants, to the number of nearly two hundred.

Independent of these more domestic arrangements, ample provision was prepared in the park, for the peasantry of Kirton and the adjacent hamlets; several oxen roasted whole, and numerous barrels of strong beer being nearly ready to supply their wants and wishes. In short, hospitality, festivity and good cheer, from the monastery "canopied with golden pall," to the rustic quaffing in the shade of beech or oak, reigned throughout the domains of Kirton Priory. The fretted roof, and tapestried hall rang with the minstrelsy of the harp; and when the banquet closed, a thousand lamps illumining the vaulted ceiling of the great gallery, invited to the dance.

Here, nearly all the beauty of that northern district, whether drawn from the vaults of the peerage or the recesses of private life, had now assembled; and shortly after the entrance of the

Majesty with the graceful daughters of his hosts, two hundred couples, following the example of their King, who had led off the first set with the elder of the two brides, were seen bounding with light and frolic step over the oaken floor-ing of that antique gallery.

As soon, however, as the bell of the central tower struck twelve, this amusement, in compliance with the previously expressed wishes of His Majesty, ceased; and the king immediately retiring, in little more than an hour all was still within the walls of the Priory. Early in the morning, likewise, in consequence of a similar arrangement with his hosts, His Majesty departed without ceremony or etiquette, highly gratified with his visit, and loaded with the thanks and benedictions of Sir Gregory and his friends.

The festivities of the Priory, however, both within and without its gates, were kept up with unabated spirit and splendour for many days; and long after every other event of that period had faded from the recollection of the neighbourhood, tradition still loved to dwell on the union of the Burrows and Bellerdistons.

00094252

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 21 October, 2015